Run-commuting in the UK: the emergence, production and potential of a mobile practice

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Declaration of Authorship

I, Simon Cook, hereby declare that this thesis and the work presented herein is entirely my own and it has not been submitted for any other degree or professional qualification. Where I have consulted the work of others, this is always clearly stated.

Simon Cook
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Abstract

This thesis explores the recent rise of run-commuting within the UK. Run-commuting is the practice of running to and/or from work and has grown in prominence within the UK (and beyond) in the last few years. This thesis offers the first study into run-commuting and aims to understand how it has emerged, how it is produced as a practice and the potential it has in the UK to sustain itself and grow.

In order to approach run-commuting with the breadth and depth necessary to understand it in this way, this thesis has drawn influence from the intellectual resources for understanding movement offered by transport geography and mobility studies, and frameworks of mobility in particular. Reflecting the changing nature of run-commuting, this study adopts a bricolage methodology that foregrounds an emergent research design alongside multiple perspectives and methodological eclecticism in understanding phenomena. Combined with five years of ethnographic engagement, this thesis explores findings generated by survey, interview and go-along methods in order to understand the rise of run-commuting in the UK.

The empirical chapters analyse the emergence of run-commuting by providing a profile of the practice, exploring the thingness, motivations, catalysts and brute facts of run-commuting. They analyse its production by exploring important spaces of run-commuting, specifically home, work, waypoints and running spaces, considering their role in enabling or constraining run-commuting practices and experiences. These reveal a practice caught between running and transport, exhibiting elements related to both. More importantly however, run-commuting is a time-management solution, harmonising the rhythms of everyday life. As such, its significance extends beyond running or commuting, playing a crucial role in the management, accomplishment and spatio-temporal structuring of everyday life for practitioners. However, this issue-driven nature of run-commuting may limit its potential and questions the sustainability of the practice, which are matters considered in the conclusion.

Contents

List of Figures

List of Tables

List of Appendices

Part One:

Approaching run-commuting

Chapter 1

Introduction: Changing practices and the emergence of run-commuting

The May 2015 edition of the biggest running magazine in the UK, Runner's World, contained within its pages an article on 'The rise of run-commuting'. The article opens by introducing us to Cate, a run-commuter who:

> "locks her front door in the morning, [knowing] she'll arrive at the office in 45 minutes, with five miles in the bag before most people have had their first latte. She'll also have sidestepped the stresses of traffic jams, the vagaries of bus timetables and the frustrations of cancelled trains. As if that wasn't enough she'll also have done her bit for a greener environment and saved some cash." (Murphy, 2015: p.59).

The article then argues that, seen in this light, it is a surprise that not everybody chooses to run-commute. The article explains that it is a practice rising in popularity and the remainder of the six-page spread explores the benefits it has, and advice on how to overcome some of the practicalities associated with run-commuting, before showcasing some of the best running backpacks for run-commuters. The piece ends with a rousing proclamation of "[l]ong live the run-commute revolution" (Murphy, 2015: p. 63).

This Runner's World article is not an anomaly. The years preceding and following this article have seen a spate of media interest in run-commuting from around the world, most commenting upon the apparent increasing popularity of the practice and offering practical advice for those considering taking it up. From the mainstream, such as The Guardian's 'How to start run-commuting' (Freeman, 2013) and The Telegraph's 'All change please: the rise of run-commuting' (Kemp, 2014), to the specialist, such as Women's Running UK's (2016) 'Why Run To Work: 6 Reasons to Start Run-Commuting' and Men's Running UK's 'Stereotypes: The Run-Commuter' (Williams, 2018), and the more curious, such as Red Bull's '10 essential hacks for running to work' (Moss, 2017) and the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales' 'Move it: commuter wellbeing' (Bryant, 2017),

the past five years has witnessed a relative explosion of media interest in run-commuting, reflecting what is argued to be a rise of interest on the streets too.

This rise in run-commuting popularity is being reported by a variety of different counts. As well as being the subject of a growing number of media articles, the prominence of hashtag #runcommute on Twitter and Instagram is rising, Google searches for "run commute" and "run to work" are increasing (Google Trends, 2018a; 2018b), and the number of run-commutes being recorded on GPS tracking app Strava grew by 70% globally between 2017-2018 (Strava, 2018). This increase in also visible on the streets. Particularly in London, which is often heralded as the global capital for run-commuting (Hellen, 2017), hotspots of the city are abounding with run-commuters at rush hour. Run-commuting now has a definite visible and discursive presence.

Understanding the rising popularity of run-commuting in the UK is, in essence, what this project is about. Based upon five years of ethnographic engagement with the practice, this thesis aims to present a bricolage of run-commuting, exploring how the practice has emerged, how it is produced and what potential it has as a mobile practice. As the above hints, what run-commuting is and the materials available to understand it through have changed over the course of this project. At its commencement, run-commuting was not something written or spoken about much. In fact, the impetus to research run-commuting did not come from seeking to engage in established conversations about run-commuting – they did not exist – rather it came from increasingly witnessing people undertaking the practice and a chance disruption to my own mobility which left me with no option but to run six miles back home. Five years later, however, run-commuting is talked about more loudly, more widely and by an increasingly varied set of stakeholders. The idea that run-commuting can become more than just a niche mode of mobility is starting to gain much purchase, particularly in London and the UK. As it continues to emerge, run-commuting is asking interesting questions about running, commuting and everyday life in contemporary society. While predominantly being discussed within running circles, run-commuting is increasingly included within conversations about active commuting, about transport provision, about public health, about workplace cultures and about balanced lifestyles. In November 2019, run-commuting even featured in the proposed active travel strategy for the London Borough of Richmond upon Thames (2019), which follows a blog post by Sheffield City Council similarly encouraging the practice (2018).

Beyond this brief overview of run-commuting however, little is known about the practice. There is a real dearth of information surrounding run-commuting and it has so far eluded sustained study from within academia or outside of it, barring some occasional acknowledgments (see Barnfield, 2020). Thus, run-commuting is something of a blank canvas and this study goes some way to resolving this by offering the first in-depth examination of run-commuting, exploring how it emerged, how it is produced and what potential it may have. I also want to encapsulate the changing nature of the practice over the course of this project. Rather than presenting a fixed snapshot of run-commuting at a particular point in time, I hope this thesis reflects its transformations and recognises that what I have been studying has not been constant. This project then, is a study of run-commuting during its emergence and offers a timely and critical exploration of the practice.

This introductory chapter seeks to set the scene of the thesis by outlining some of the context to the emergence of run-commuting as well as the research questions, aims, and objectives of the project. This will begin with some definitional work around run-commuting. Following this, the centrality of change in understanding run-commuting will be introduced accompanied by an exploration of how the changing nature of both running and commuting provides some crucial context within which the rise of run-commuting must be situated. This chapter ends by outlining the research questions, aims and objectives of this project and providing a brief run through of the thesis, signposting the major landmarks that follow.

What is run-commuting?

While in many ways, run-commuting is a relatively self-explanatory practice, there are some key distinctions that need to be made about it. Crucial in beginning any explanation about the practice is to recognise that run-commuting is not *the* term which defines it. A variety of labels exists which all describe the same practice (see Chapter 4), but run-commuting has been chosen for this thesis as it is the term that seems to have the widest use, around which things are organised, and it more clearly marks the uniqueness of using running as a mode of commuting. My use of run-commuting is intended as an umbrella term however, to account for all various labels given to the practice. Throughout this project, run-commuting is understood as a practice which deploys running as a means to traverse the distance between

work and home. Simply, run-commuting is a practice in which people choose to run all or part of the way from home to work and/or vice-versa. It is running as a mode of transport.

The element of choice here is crucial in understanding contemporary run-commuting in the UK. Although it is rarely thought about in such light contemporarily, running has always been a means of transport. If we consider transport, at its simplest, to be the vehicle through which people and things travel from one place to another, then running that can easily be seen within these parameters (see Cook, 2014). At its core, running involves getting to somewhere from somewhere else - it is a locational displacement. John Bale (2004) has described running as human's second technology for overcoming the distance of time-space and this ability to traverse Point B from Point A through running has proved an important service for humans throughout history (Gotaas, 2009). Unlike these historical uses of running-as-transport, run-commuters have a choice. They do not *have* to run to get to where they need to be due to lack of alternatives. They are, on the whole, choosing to do so. Run-commuters choose not to utilise developments in transport technologies and instead revert to a more traditional mode of getting around. It is, generally, a mobility of choice rather than necessity.

Such agency in mobility choice also helps to delineate run-commuting from other contemporary manifestations of running-as-transport. In non-western countries, running-as-transport may still be an involuntary phenomenon. Transport systems and technologies have not equally developed around the world and as such, the prevalence of people needing to run as a means of transport still exists. For example, a review by Larouche et al (2014) suggests that 60% of young people in rural Kenya run to school every day. Involuntary running-as-transport is apparent in western countries too, however more commonly in a different form. Pause long enough at any bus stop or train station and the sight of people dashing in an emergency form of running-as-transport will come along soon enough (Cook, 2017). While run-commuting is generally a choice, this emergency form of running-as-transport is often unintentional, impromptu and undesired. Although important practices to understand, I consider these forms of running-as-transport to be different practices to run-commuting and thus are not included within this study.

The final distinction needed in understanding what run-commuting is (and what it is not), is the relationship between running and walking. Foot mobilities are inherently ambiguous. The question of what distinguishes run-commuting from walk-

commuting is not as straightforward as it seems. The two are very easy to slip between, many runners use walking within their training and many walkers may fall into a little run during parts of their commute. The two also share many of the same biomechanical characteristics and the attributes surrounding speed or effort would not be definite is demarcating the practices. In trying to identify running from walking purely from the physical movements made, rhythm is what often proves decisive. UK Athletics' (2018) rules for competition explain that when walking, a walker must always maintain contact with the ground, i.e. at least one foot must be on the floor at all times. When running, a runner tends to be airborne for short periods of time as both feet leave the ground between strides. However, being interested in run-commuting as a practice, not just as an abstract movement, draws the attention to the wider meanings, motivations, skills and experiences associated with run-commuting and walk-commuting. These are generally different and individually held. Therefore, for the purposes of this study, if someone says they are run-commuting, they will be included.

Despite having delineated run-commuting from historical manifestations of running-as-transport above, I am not seeking to argue that run-commuting is a wholly new practice. As participants in this study attest, people have been run-commuting for many decades. Before the days of sponsorship, professional athletes often needed to work alongside their training. Many utilised their journeys to work in order to achieve this and thus the ranks of run-commuters have included some of the best runners in the UK. Run-commuting is changing however. There is a new sense of enthusiasm around run-commuting, one which is recruiting more practitioners and more attention to the practice, which in turn is changing the nature of run-commuting and beginning to optimistically question what role this practice may have to play in contemporary society.

Changing Practices

As the various references made to it in this chapter suggest, change is an important context within which to understand run-commuting practices. This is due to the emergent nature of run-commuting but also the changes to wider practices of everyday life it is bundled with. Therefore, while this is a study of run-commuting it speaks more widely to the interest in how practices are changing, and specifically

how mobile practices change. While not forming a core conceptual focus for the project, I have taken influence from academic work into changing practices and change, providing a useful context within which to situate the rise of run-commuting.

Geographers have long been interested in changing practices, innovation and transformation (see Hägerstrand, 1967 for a seminal example). Recent years have seen a wider, and more sustained multidisciplinary interest in such change however and it has become a significant activity within scholarly work across a wide range of fields. Change is both an inevitable aspect of life but can also be desirable and in various ways scholarly work has aimed at tackling this. While some work around change is interested in understanding how change happens and what conditions give rise to it, much work is also interested in trying to encourage change. The latter is particularly true for work exploring more sustainably, healthy and/or just ways of living. While I am not starting out my research with such an advocacy agenda, this has been a major impetus within mobilities research, particularly for work seeking to encourage low-carbon mobilities through various conceptual lenses, including transitions theories, habit, socio-technical systems and theories of practice (see Geels, 2012; Schwanen et al, 2012; Shove et al, 2012; Watson, 2012; Givoni and Banister, 2013; Bissell, 2014a; 2014b; Schwanen, 2016; Higham and Hopkins, 2016; Temenos et al, 2017 for example). Together these have formed a major strand of mobilities work interested in how and why practices change, and how this may be harnessed to address some of the largest socio-environmental issues we face.

The influence I see this change research having on the study of run-commuting is the interest in the stability and transformation of practices. Run-commuting demonstrates both change within itself but also proposes changes to the wider eponymous practices incorporated within it – running and commuting. I have already outlined some of the changes observed within run-commuting over the last few years, yet there are further changes within both running and commuting practices which are important in grasping the context of contemporary run-commuting that I will briefly outline here. It is crucial to situate the rise of run-commuting within the changing nature of both running and commuting.

Changing Running

Running is one of humanity's oldest, most enduring and popular phenomena. It is a practice of longevity and ubiquity, but not necessarily of obduracy. Running is a practice of change, reconfiguring for different contexts and adapting for different purposes. Over the course of history, running has performed a complex set of cultural, political and biological roles (Whelan, 2012), including in human evolution (Bramble and Lieberman, 2004), in cultural rituals (Guttmann, 2004), in transport (Bale, 2011), in gymnastic endeavours (Vettenniemi, 2012), in incarceration and punishment (Cregan-Reid, 2014), as well as in the sporting and physical activity contexts we know contemporarily. There is never only one way of running, however. There are multiple and parallel manifestations of running whose changes can be subtle or striking, complementary or competing (Qviström, 2017). Sometimes these changes will establish a niche form of the practice, other times they can grow to become the dominant configuration. Contemporary understandings of running conceptualise it as primarily about sport, fitness and health. These understandings are actually quite recent. The increasing ubiquity and normalisation of running did not truly occur until the running boom of the 1970s (Tanio, 2012; Latham, 2015; Cook et al, 2016a) but such is the pervasiveness of these understandings that previous and other manifestations of running, including that of running-as-transport, are largely unaccounted for in analyses of contemporary running (see Bridel et al, 2016; Borgers et al, 2015). Although very much grounded in understandings of running as sport, fitness and health, run-commuting clearly represents a different manifestation of running – a change that both harks back to the past and illuminates a possible future for the practice.

Wider changes to enhance the productivity and inclusivity of running also impacts upon the context of the emergence of run-commuting. One trend evident with running practices is to put the mass energy expounded by millions of people doing it to wider use, making running productive beyond the physical and experiential benefits of it (see Cregan-Reid, 2016 for a rousing exegesis of these). This is seen in the rise of activity tracking and augmented reality running apps, such as Strava, Zombie Run! or even Pokémon GO, which can increase a run's productivity through gamification and virtual competition (Barratt, 2017; LeBlanc and Chaput,

2017; Witkowski, 2018). But the perhaps the most notable example of increasing the productiveness of running practices is Goodgym. This charitable organisation is a community of runners who combine their runs with doing good, such as supporting isolated older people, and undertaking physical tasks for community organisations (Marsh, 2014). These examples provide a useful context within which to situate the rise of run-commuting. For many, the act of accomplishing your commute while doing a run is the ultimate killing of two birds with one stone, and inherently provides running with more purpose and productive outcomes.

The second important contextual change within running is the increasing attempts to make it more inclusive. This itself sits within attempts in wider health circles to increase the accessibility of physical activity, catalysed by the growing recognition that contemporary lifestyles are overly and increasingly sedentary, with severe consequences for individual and public health (Guthold et al, 2018; Public Health England, 2014; 2018). Reducing the levels of inactivity is a key priority for society and has led to a greater emphasis within running on accessibility and inclusivity. Running organisations and stakeholders are no longer predominantly concerned with the production of elite-level athletes and the fortunes of those for whom running is a serious endeavour. Increasing the numbers of those who run has become an equal, if not greater, priority over recent years (England Athletics, 2017).

In concrete terms, this has encouraged the incorporation of running into everyday rhythms and everyday spaces rather than occurring in the specialised spaces and times of running, such as the athletics tracks and running clubs (Bale, 2004; Cook et al, 2017). Such endeavours are visible in the successes of This Girl Can, a media campaign by Sport England aimed at increasing the participation of women in physical activity which launched in 2015 (Mulgrew et al, 2018), and the global success of *parkrun*. *parkrun* organises weekly, free, 5km timed runs around the world which are open to everyone. The first *parkrun* took place in Bushy Park, London in 2004 with only 13 runners. Today there are more than 1,600 different *parkruns* in 20 countries (including 560 *parkruns* in the UK) and over 3 million people have run one (parkrun, n.d.). It is widely heralded as ground-breaking running and public health initiative and demonstrates the immense possibilities of making running accessible and inclusive (Stevinson et al, 2015). This context is important in understanding run-commuting as it exhibits another means by which running can be accessibly and inclusively incorporated into everyday spaces and rhythms. While there are undoubtedly many barriers associated with run-commuting (which will be

explored in the thesis), theoretically it offers the chance to run without the need to make time or space for it within the competing demands of everyday life, as it utilises time and space already occupied by other activities.

Recent geographical research into running has generally understood it within these contemporary contexts and conceptualisations. Such research has grown in popularity across social science, art and humanity disciplines in recent years, offering new social and cultural perspectives on a practice that had previously been the preserve of biological and performance sciences. The lack of sustained study and interest in running from geography and allied fields noted by Bale in 2004 is being overturned, illuminating the practice in new and important ways (see Bridel et al, 2016; Cubizolles et al, 2018; and Scheerder et al, 2015 for some collections and overviews). Although this research rarely considers running as a form of commuting or transport, or its entanglements with work and employment, or current transformations of running as a practice as this thesis does, it is still valuable in this project. This wider running research helps to understanding the running elements of run-commuting and will also help highlight when run-commuting may pose challenges to and diversions from wider running practices. As such, I will briefly review some recent research into running undertaken in geography, sport sociology, physical cultural studies, health studies and beyond that help inform understandings of and comparisons with run-commuting in this project.

While useful in illuminating running practices, much recent research has also employed running variously as a device to advance other understandings, including methodological developments, such as autoethnography (Allen-Collinson, 2012) or mobile methods (Palmer, 2016); theoretical contributions, such as the importance of non-representation theories for health research (Barnfield, 2016a; 2016b); conceptual ideas, such as rhythm (Edensor et al, 2018; Edensor and Larsen, 2018; Larsen, 2019), practitioner talk (Hitchings and Latham, 2016) and post-colonialism (Lisle, 2016); or particular spaces, such as the post-socialist landscapes of Sofia (Barnfield, 2017). Such works say much about contemporary running practices and adds to other work on running to form an important body of research that this thesis draws on. Four broad themes can be identified within this work that this brief review with be structured around: running and society; running, space and place; running and technology; and running experiences.

The question of what roles, values and impacts running has in society has been a variedly explored theme in recent running research. While this predominantly

concerns the health elements of running practices (MacBride-Stewart, 2019a; 2019b; Shipway and Holloway, 2010; 2016), other societal functions of running have also been explored, including as forms of volunteering (Tupper et al, 2020), philanthropy (Palmer and Dwyer, forthcoming), tourism (Larsen and Bærenholdt, 2019; Sheehan, 2006), art (Chance, 2020a; 2020b; Tan, 2019), and transport (Cook, 2014; 2017) among others. Some work has also taken to trace the historical lineages of these different roles and the different functions of running in society (Latham, 2015; Qviström; 2017).

Dropping down from a societal scale, work has also looked at the social implications of running for individuals. This work has demonstrated the importance running can have in people lives, acting as significant third places (Hindley, 2020) and holding central roles in the social worlds (Shipway et al, 2013) and identity formation of runners (Allen-Collinson and Hockey, 2001; 2007; Griffin and Phoenix, 2016; Ronkainen et al, 2018a; 2018b). As such, running plays an important role in many people's lives (Cook et al, 2016a), affecting the spatio-temporal structuring of the everyday (Barnfield, 2020; Edensor and Larsen, 2018; Qviström et al, 2020; Smith, 2002) and impacting social relations (Lev and Zach, 2020). While the presumed social nature of running, as a sort of communal practice, has been questioned (Hitchings and Latham, 2017b), forms of social capital are associated with running (Larsen and Bærenholdt, 2019; Wiltshire and Stevinson, 2018) and feed into the politics of it. Running is a socially divided practice with distinct gendered and classed elements having been explored so far in the literature (Abbas, 2004; Allen-Collinson, 2011; 2013; Witkowski, 2018).

Another broad trend within recent running recent is its relationship with space and place. A whole body of work has explored where runners run and what makes an attractive running environment, whether that be indoors or outdoors, urban or rural (Barnfield, 2020; Cook et al, 2016a; Deelen et al, 2019; Ettema, 2016; Hitchings and Latham, 2016; Qviström et al, 2020). The (dis)benefits these places have for health, performance, experience or personal meanings have also been explored variously (Hinch and Kono, 2018; Hodgson and Hitchings, 2018; Lorimer, 2012; MacBride-Stewart, 2019a: 2019b). Such understandings feed into contemporary and historical attempts to increase running participation through purpose-built running landscapes and facilities (Borgers et al, 2016; Qviström, 2013; 2016).

A more critical lens has also been applied to runners' relationship with place, asking where and how running fits into spaces not designed for them and what that means

for the value placed on running in society. Exploring how runners negotiate the shared spaces through which they run (Cook et al, 2016; Edensor et al, 2018) and how running often requires a transgression or reclamation of space in order to take place (Cidell, 2014; 2016; Edensor and Larsen, 2018; McGahern, 2019) have been key elements of such work. Together, they demonstrate the ongoing struggles runners can have for rights to space within which to run in contemporary societies.

A more recent but pervasive addition to running practices is mobile and digital technologies. A more emerging theme than others, researchers have been keen to explore what impact technologies, such as GPS watches, heart rate monitors and social networks, have on running practices and how running is mediated through them. Not only has this body of work documented the varied uses and entanglements of running with technology (Littlejohns et al, 2019) but has also more critically interrogated the ways in which such technologies are producing and disciplining running bodies through self-quantification and entanglements of data and embodiment (Esmonde, 2019; Little, 2017). For many, such technologies are now part of the materiality of running, they are affective and effective within the taking-place, sense-making and performance of running practices (Barnfield, 2016b). For those who use them, technologies are inseparable from their own bodies – running has become a joint and networked accomplishment.

The final theme I wish to briefly highlight is running research's engagement with experience and embodiment. Here, work is interested in how the intense embodiment of running is felt and exploring the uniqueness of running as a form of mobility by attending to what it is like to run. Drawing on various phenomenological, ethnomethodological, feminist, non-representational and practice theories, work within this strand has explored running experiences in a myriad of ways. Much has focussed on the role of the senses in running, including haptic, visual and thermo sensations (Allen-Collinson and Hockey, 2011; 2013; Allen-Collinson and Owton, 2015; Allen-Collinson et al, 2018; Hockey, 2006; 2013; Hockey and Allen-Collinson, 2006; 2019; Smith, 2019). This work has variously demonstrated the significance of the sensate for feeling, understanding, expressing, evaluating, performing and perceiving running experiences, both in the moment and beyond it. Senses are also key in the experiential relations between runners and others that further running research has explored. Here notions of materiality, rhythm and encounters have been used to explore the importance of runners' engagements with objects (Edensor et al, 2018), humans (Cook et al, 2016a; 2017)

and even non-humans (Merchant, 2020) on their experiences. Together this work demonstrates that running experiences are relational, more-than-human and sensory and that positive experiences are key to its facilitation and promotion.

This latter point also speaks to the embodied politics of running that courses through this body of work. Research has explored how running is felt differently by different bodies and the implications of this. Notably there is both a gendering of running experiences, with women more likely to encounter negative or harassing experiences when running in public (Allen-Collison, 2010; 2011; Witkowski, 2018), and an embodied politics based on competence or familiarity. Running can be hard and its intense embodiments are not always pleasurable. There are certain bodily competencies required to derive pleasure in such pain (Lev, 2019) and there is often a process of becoming associated with new runners (Griffin and Phoenix, 2016), meaning that greater experience with running generates better experiences. Such experiential dimensions are, thus, crucial to consider for beginner runners and the promotion of running as a healthy, accessible and inclusive practice for all.

Changing Commuting

By comparison, commuting is a much younger practice than running, with perhaps a less kaleidoscopic past, but it has become one of the most pervasive and significant mobility practices of the contemporary world with vast transformative impact. While people have always had to get to work, the concept of commuting as a mass phenomenon is considered an outcome of capitalist processes and spatialities. These led to the mass separation of work and home for the first time in human history, and thus the commute developed as the lubricant between them (Aldred, 2014; Gately, 2014). Despite being often characterised as an unchanging and monotonous practice, with the nature of commuting has actually changed quite substantially over its history. As a something of a whistle-stop history of commuting in the UK (see Pooley and Turnbull, 2000; Aldred, 2014; Gately, 2014 for detailed accounts), walking was the dominant mode of commuting at the turn of the 20th Century, with rising cycling levels evident too. However, the early 20th Century witnessed the rise of suburban railways whose dominance only subsided in 1960s and 1970s as personal automobility began to rise. These changes are related to a range of wider geographical, technological, vocational, social and cultural

transformations (see Pooley and Turnbull, 2000; Aldred, 2014; Gately, 2014), and while the car still dominates today, counter trends are also present within some areas of the country as the use of public transport and cycling have grown in prominence once again (Aldred, 2014). This has led to discussions about the notion of peak-car use and even a new era of travel altogether (Metz, 2013).

Although often perceived as liminal – suspended between the poles of production and recreation in a world of its own (Gately, 2014) - the changes discussed above demonstrate the wide sphere of influence commuting has. Commuting is actually entangled with a huge range of other processes and practices, and changes in these arenas significantly affect commuting. Social practice theories would think of this as a bundling of practices (see Cass and Faulconbridge, 2016).

This bundling means that equally, changes in the nature of commuting can impact other practices too. While there is only space to give a flavour of this here, a large body of work exists that demonstrates the entangling of commuting with other processes and practices of life. Commuting technologies have impacted on the geographies and built form of the places in which people live and work, transforming existing spatial and social orders and thus the commute is also entangled with structural changes in the organisation of the economy (Aldred, 2014; Bissell, 2018). Commuting has also had significant impact on lifestyles and social order, catalysing the collective timetable that personal and social lives are structured around, which the daily rush hour and school run are testament to (Urry, 2007; Gately, 2014). Furthermore, commuting also has a large personal impact on commuters themselves, and therefore changes to commuting practices are profoundly felt. These impacts result from the time spent commuting and its experiential, financial, social, familial, and physical/mental wellbeing consequences (see Jain and Lyons, 2008; Lyons and Chatterjee, 2008; Gately, 2014; Bissell, 2018). Commuting is also caught up in societal differentiation, particularly gendered differences. Not only is the history of commuting strewn with instances of unequal adoption of transport technologies (Pooley and Turnbull, 2000; McDowell et al, 2006; Aldred, 2014; Shaw and Docherty, 2014a) but there is also a gender politics to externalities of commuting. For example, women's commutes are more likely to involve trip-chaining, which is more difficult to do on public transport or actively, and therefore a car is often used for convenience (Shaw and Docherty, 2014a). The negative impacts of commuting are more greatly felt by those who commute by car, particularly with regards to health and wellbeing (Martin et al, 2014; Chatterjee et

al, 2020; Clark et al, forthcoming). Trip-chaining also makes the commute more rigid and less open to change, decreasing opportunities to improve commuting lives.

This demonstrates the significance of commuting to people, society and spaces. It is a vastly transformative practice and one which continually changes. The role commuting has in connecting multiple spheres of life entails wide-ranging impacts from any changes to commuting, and that commuting is entangled with external influences. This is vital to understand within the examination of run-commuting this project offers. With that in mind, a few contemporary changes in the nature of commuting are important to consider when setting the scene of run-commuting. There are the two changes I want to focus on in particular here, which mirror the changes discussed within running – that of increasing the productivity and activeness of commuting practices.

In traditional transport economics, time spent travelling is seen as unproductive. There is a tendency within transport planning to seek to decrease travel time under the assumption that here is no intrinsic value to be gained from travelling (Jain, 2011; Jain and Lyons, 2008; Lyons and Urry, 2005; Lyons et al, 2007; Metz, 2008). However, these perspectives are being challenged, opening up alternative ways of conceptualising travel time and productivity away from purely wasted time (Anable and Gatersleben, 2005; Lyons and Loo, 2008; Lin, 2012). These ideas have generally focussed on the ability to both do work on the move (Laurier, 2004; Lyons et al, 2013) and on the opportunities to relax while travelling (reading, sleeping, window-gazing, catching up with friends/family), which in turn can make people more productive once as their destinations. This work constructs the commute as a space for time (Adey, 2017) and thus a 'gift' rather than a burden (Jain and Lyons, 2008). These ideas are taking root within transport provisions, with many initiatives now aimed at enabling commuters to be more productive on the go, offer greater sociality and improved travel experiences to enhance onward productivity or wellbeing. The increasing presence of Wi-Fi and charging points on buses and trains are a good example of this. Perceiving travel-time as having some utility may also alter travel behaviour with people opting for slower modes in order to linger longer or be productive on-the-go. This idea certainly has much relevance for understanding the emergence of run-commuting. However, run-commuting further invites us to consider productivity more widely to include physical activity and the productive jobs it performs - maintaining physical/mental health, completing

'training', and freeing up the time these activities would have occupied elsewhere in the day.

Secondly, the same public health imperatives to decrease inactivity within society discussed earlier have pointed towards the commute as a key site in which to tackle this and to embed physical activity into daily life (Andersen, 2016). This has meant a targeted approach to specifically increase the numbers of people cycling and walking to work (Pooley et al, 2013), which has been successful in some areas of the UK, particularly London (Aldred, 2014). Active commuting has positive impacts on health and wellbeing as well as has broader societal advantages, such as helping towards developing low carbon transport systems and decreasing the local and global impact of commuting on the environment (Aldred, 2014; Shaw and Docherty, 2014a). The context of encouraging more active and lower carbon forms of transport forms a significant part of the context within which the recent rise of run-commuting has taken place. Yet run-commuting also pushes dominant understandings as to what is meant by active commuting, inviting considerations to modes beyond walking and cycling.

The contemporary changes occurring within both running and commuting practices outlined above, combine to provide one further context within which the rise of run-commuting should be considered. The traditional time-space separation of activities relating to exercise/leisure and commuting (Cass and Faulconbridge, 2016) is being blurred and challenged. As the rise of cycle-commuting bears witness to, the possibilities to combine exercise and commuting activities are increasing, and the commute is being converted into a leisure/sporting activity for some (Aldred and Jungnickel, 2012; Larsen, 2018a). The opportunity to do exercise when commuting is desirable to many and in recent years has led to a diversity of practices that combine (or have proposed to) commuting with gym sessions, spin classes, skateboarding, scooting, rollerblading, kayaking and swimming among others (see Wainwright, 2012; Virgin Trains, 2015; Hinde, 2016; Loher, 2017; Millward, 2017; BBC, 2018). Run-commuting is an important practice within this movement and the context of altering relationships between exercise and commuting plays a crucial role in understanding the emergence of run-commuting.

Questions raised by run-commuting

Run-commuting and the context to its emergence presented above pose many interesting questions about the way in which we live our lives, and how these spatially manifest in exercise and transport practices. They question understandings of commuting practices and exercise practices, challenging what counts as commuting/exercise and what doesn't. They query the relationship between commuting and exercise and what effect the blurring of them may have. They question notions of productivity with mobility as well as why different transport modes are chosen. They ask how commuting is aided or challenged by workplace and family cultures/practices, as well as what impact changing commuting/exercise practices may have on these. These questions are not easy to answer, there is a great complexity involved in changing commuting practices as they are bound up with many other practices which both affect them and are affected by them. What is clear is that the decision to run-commute is not a simple one. It is not simply a transport decision but it speaks much more widely to how people accomplish their everyday lives. Why this happens, how this happens, and what impact this has are fascinating questions this project seeks to explore. The prospect of run-commuting is an enticing and complex one, that asks an array of fascinating questions about running, about commuting, about work, about health, about family, and about everyday life in contemporary society. It is a practice that warrants further investigation.

Research questions, aims and objectives

In exploring the tantalising practice of run-commuting, I will be guided by the following research questions, aims and objectives, which also demonstrate the intentions of this project. The principle research question driving this project is:

- Why has run-commuting emerged, how does it take place, and what potential does it demonstrate?

By posing this question, there is a range of secondary research questions the project seeks to attend to:

- What is run-commuting?
- What is motivating the uptake of run-commuting?
- Why is run-commuting occurring in some places and not others?
- How does run-commuting happen and what is the experience of doing it?
- What influences the taking place of run-commuting?
- How are run-commuting practices sustained?
- How does run-commuting relate to the wider practices of running and commuting?
- How is run-commuting enabled and constrained?
- What politics of mobility are associated with run-commuting?
- What is the potential of run-commuting?

On the basis of these questions, the aims of the research are as follows:

- To explore how new mobile practices emerge, take place and are sustained in the case of run-commuting.

In order to achieve these aims and help answer the research questions, the following objectives will be completed:

- Collect and analyse broad-scale data about the characteristics of run-commuting and run-commuters in the UK and the tempo-spatialities of the practice.
- Analyse the motivations of run-commuters and reasons why the practice has emerged.
- Analyse the taking place of run-commuting from a practitioner perspective.
- Assess the role different spaces have on the emergence and taking place of run-commuting.
- Consider the potential of run-commuting.

The road ahead

The road ahead for this thesis is split into four parts. The first part sets up the project by providing and introduction to the practice (this chapter), before discussing the conceptual approach of the research (Chapter 2), and the methodology adopted (Chapter 3). Part 2 provides a profile of run-commuting in the UK by exploring the thingness of run-commuting (Chapter 4), the brute facts of run-commuting (Chapter 5) and the motivations and catalysts of the practice (Chapter 6). Together, they offer a portrait of what run-commuting looks like in the UK in order to establish a context that the more fine-grained findings of the thesis are built upon. Part 3, the spaces of run-commuting, explores some of the significant sites within which run-commuting is produced within the UK. These include home spaces (Chapter 7), work spaces (Chapter 8), routes (Chapter 9) and spaces on the run (Chapter 10). These chapters focus on how run-commuting is lived and actually happens, as well as the way these spaces enable and constrain the practice differently. The final part of the thesis, Part 4, draws conclusions from the rest of the thesis, identifying the key findings about run-commuting and the contributions of these (Chapter 11).

The next chapter will explore the conceptual approach this project is taking to the study of run-commuting. To do so, it will begin with a discussion of the disciplinary positioning of the research before exploring three frameworks related to mobile practices which have influenced the project's approach. From this, common elements between the approaches are discussed which form the key conceptual trope of my approach to run-commuting.

Chapter 2

Conceptual Approach to Run-Commuting

The overview of run-commuting I sketched out in the introduction is enticing. It is a practice that seems to ask many questions but as of yet these are not answered. However, the task of trying to colour in run-commuting is also laced with many unknowns and attempting to provide the first academic account of a whole practice is slightly daunting. When there is so much to know about run-commuting, and so little already there to build on, how best to go about exploring the practice? What approaches are capable of investigating the research questions of this project? What intellectual resources can be drawn upon to help interrogate run-commuting? There will be multiple answers to these questions but this chapter seeks to set out how I have approached the task in this project. In doing so, this chapter highlights some of the key ideas and ways of thinking about run-commuting that have influenced my approach to researching and understanding it. This outline of my approach begins with a discussion of the disciplinary perspectives I will bring to run-commuting, positioning the project between mobilities studies and transport geography. After this, I will outline three conceptual frameworks associated with these disciplines that I have found influential in attempting to think about run-commuting holistically, in approaching run-commuting in ways capable of attending to its emergence, production and potential. Drawing influence from these, the chapter concludes by identifying common key conceptual tropes found in the frameworks and that underpin the approach I have taken to run-commuting in this project.

Disciplinary perspectives: mobilities and transport

In the introduction, I continuously referred to run-commuting as a mobile practice, which is indicative of the (inter)disciplinary positioning I approach this study of run-commuting from. I draw influence predominantly from mobility studies and transport studies, which may not be the expected home of research into running. Most academic research into running has traditionally come from the sport, health

and life sciences, seeking to understand running physiology, ways to improve performance, prevent injuries or understand the health benefits of running (see Noakes, 2003 and Anderson, 2013 for example). This is research that primarily codes running as a sporting and health pursuit, running as a science. This is not where my abiding interest in researching running or run-commuting lies however. Running-science work offers few resources to understand the sort of questions outlined in the introduction, to understand running as a mobile phenomenon, or to understand manifestations of running that may be outside of the sport-health hegemony, to understand it as a transport mode. The social sciences, art and humanities do offer such resources but running has generally eluded sustained study in such fields (beyond the work of John Bale anyway – 1994; 2000a; 2000b; 2003; 2004; 2008; Bale and Sang, 1996; Vertinsky and Bale, 2004; Pitsiladis et al, 2007).

We are in the midst of this being rectified however. When this project began, socio-cultural research into running was emerging at an ever greater rate, but the vast majority of previous research was concerned with formulations of running as a sport – focussing on either professional athletes or 'serious' runners (see Cook et al, 2016a for an overview). By serious, I am drawing on Stebbin's (1992: p.3) concept of serious leisure, which is the "systematic pursuit of an amateur, hobbyist, or volunteer activity that participants find so substantial and interesting that, in the typical case, they launch themselves on a career centred on acquiring and expressing its special skills, knowledge and experience". Related to running, serious leisure tends to translate into very high commitment and strong identification with the practice that plays a central role in people's lives, where other aspects of life are organised to accommodate running (Allen-Collinson and Hockey, 2007; Ronkainen et al, 2017).

Over the course of the project, however, a real boom in socio-cultural running research has emerged relating to more everyday, less serious and more casual forms of running, bringing new subjects, subjectivities and ideas to bear on running (see Barnfield, 2016a; 2016b; Cook et al, 2016a; 2017; Hitchings and Latham, 2016; 2017a; 2017b; Edensor et al, 2018; Larsen, 2019 for some examples as well the brief review offered in Chapter 1). These works have variously drawn on geographical and mobilities approaches in their research, helping to move academic research into running away from such a sport and serious leisure focus. My project into run-commuting will draw valuably on these works as well contributing significantly to

this emergence of new research into running by offering another perspective on it, as a commuting mode, and considerations of how running fits into everyday life.

However, given the more-than-sport nature of run-commuting I am keen to avoid locating this project's starting point solely within a perspective that understands running as a sport first and foremost. Simply, there may be more at play than just sporting dimensions in run-commuting that I want to give equal opportunity to illuminate. Recognising that this project is interested in a manifestation of running being used for transport purposes, I think it is important to position this research within perspectives that enable all formulations of running to be studied within their remit. For me, such a task involves returning to the root of what running is and at its core, running is a form of movement.

On-the-move research in geography has generally formed two broad trajectories – transport geography and mobilities research (Adey et al, 2011). This is research into movement on the everyday level anyway; migration studies are also significant in geographic studies of movement. Hitherto, neither transport geography or mobilities has engaged too greatly with running as a mobile form, as Cidell notes, running appears to have "fallen through the cracks" (2014: p.571) of both fields. Although such research is increasing, herein lies an opportunity for this study to remedy the dearth by conducting research that adds to and draws from both fields in various ways. As the following will demonstrate, such an endeavour would not only be valuable in understanding run-commuting but will heed to calls for greater dialogue between the two fields.

Mobilities

Thus far, research into running within geographic studies of movement have been influenced by socio-cultural-geographically inclined mobilities research (see Cook et al, 2016a; Edensor et al, 2018; Larsen, 2019), a field that offers many valuable resources for exploring run-commuting. While the study of human movement in geography has a long and turbulent history, variously moving in and out of favour in geographical research, renewed academic endeavour in this arena over the past two decades has been greeted by the heralding of a mobilities turn (Cresswell, 2006; 2008). This turn is said to recognise and respond to the "quantitative and qualitative transformations in the empirical nature of mobility" (Cresswell, 2008: p.129) and

the centrality of mobility to theorisations of the body, cities, space, place, and society (Cresswell, 2006; Cook, 2018), which an interdisciplinary field has developed study.

While there is no space to recount here the well-versed establishment and development of the mobilities turn (see Hannam et al, 2006; Sheller and Urry, 2006; 2016; Vannini, 2010; Sheller, 2017) or to review the range of work being done under its banner (see Cresswell, 2011; 2012; 2014; Sheller, 2011; Merriman, 2015; 2016; 2017; Faulcolnbridge and Hui, 2016; Kwan and Schwanen, 2016; Adey, 2017), I do just want to highlight some of its features that will be influential to this run-commuting project. The turn is said to have challenged the a-mobile nature of much social science research, attending to the complex relationships between mobilities and immobilities instead. This has involved a critical re-examination of 'sedentarist' (seeing mobilities through the lens of place, roots and belonging) and 'nomadic' (using mobility to ask new questions about society) theoretical approaches, evaluating the politics that emerge from such thinking and contributing to a field focussed on the interplay between flow, flux and dynamism, and stops, blockages and immobilities (Cresswell, 2002; 2008; Jensen, 2013).

In doing so, mobilities research has engaged significantly with theories of practice and non-representational theories (Merriman, 2012) and drawn on work that progressively reimagines place as open, unbounded and relational (Amin, 2004; Massey, 1993), and culture as about routes rather than roots (Cresswell, 2006). Thus far, mobility had been considered neutral and remained unspecified in academic analyses. Mobility scholars have since taken to illuminating mobility by exploring what movement means and what it means to move (Bissell, 2010a). Mobility is now understood as about so much more than getting from A to B (Jensen, 2013). Movement is meaningful, it is experienced, and the way we move has an impact on our experiences and relations (Fincham et al, 2010).

Notions of affect have been influential within non-representational mobilities research in thinking about some of these relations and impacts. While conventionally considered as the influence one thing has upon another, in contemporary human geography and beyond, affect is more widely understood as referring to the impersonal and preconscious ways in which bodies relate to and experience the world (Castree et al, 2013). Approaches to affect are diverse and variously consider the role of emotions, embodiment, materials and the relations between such porous entities (Bazinet and Van Vliet, 2020). I employ it as an

analytical device throughout this thesis, drawing on the broad understanding of affect as the capacity of bodies to affect and be affected, equating affect to forms of flow that pulse between bodies and things (Bazinet and Van Vliet, 2020). Following a Spinozist-Deleuzian understanding, these flows are impersonal relations, "energetic encounters between bodies [and things] in particular places" (Conradson and Latham, 2007: p.232) that are first registered pre-personally. Shouse (2005: n.p.) explains that "an affect is a non-conscious experience of intensity; it is a moment of unformed and unstructured potential [… that] is always prior to and/or outside consciousness". Such processes have productive potential; they enable, constrain and materialise, affecting what bodies can do and their capacities to do (Bissell, 2010b). In doing so, the remit of the social is expanded beyond the human, drawing attention to the importance of non-human forces in these relations, prompting "us to think about how different configurations of objects, technologies, and bodies come together to form different experiences" (Bissell, 2010b: p.272). This affective thinking has been mobilised variously in mobilities research, aiding understandings of how movement is enabled, constrained, meaningful, experienced and political in, for example, transnational mobility (Conradson and Latham, 2007), passenger atmospheres (Bissell, 2010b), control in airports (Adey, 2008) and encouraging children's active mobility (Tranter and Sharpe, 2012).

Mobilities "influence the practices, experiences and perceptions of place, subjectivity and identity" (Kellerman, 2006: 57), and focuses on "the ways in which bodies and things move, the political, cultural and aesthetic implications of resonances of these movements, the meanings ascribed to these movements and the embodied experiences of mobility" (Cresswell and Merriman, 2011: p.11). The mobilities turn has initiated a wide-ranging corpus of work that addresses such concerns by exploring an impressively eclectic range of mobilities from the scale of the body (or smaller in the case of vital mobilities – Sodero, 2019) to the global. Running however does not feature with much regularity (although increasing) in such analyses, which is surprising considering its popularity as a mobile form (Scheerder et al, 2015). I see the understandings and perspectives of mobilities as able to make sense of running-commuting and, thus, valuable to this project.

Transport

Although the mobilities thinking shown above does have longer historical lineage than the newness of the turn would suggest - Cresswell draws on the humanistic geography of JB Jackson, David Seamon and Yi-Fu Tuan in his seminal *On the Move* (2006) and Urry on Simmel and Goffman in his articulations of *Sociology Beyond Societies* (2000) and *Mobilities* (2007) - transport geography can perhaps trace its lineage as a discernible sub-discipline back further. Transport geography was a key component of regional geography and it had a starring role in geography's refashioning as a spatial science in the 1960s (Castree et al, 2013). In essence, transport geography has traditionally been the study of the spatial aspects of transport: the spatial distribution and effects of transport modalities and infrastructures, and the people and goods who move through transport systems (Shaw et al, 2008; Hanson, 2009; Castree et al, 2013). Under transport geography's microscope, movement was traditionally understood as derived demand – transport develops due to the requirement of people and goods to get between A and B - things won't move unless they have to (Cresswell, 2006; Shaw et al, 2008). Movement is viewed here through a sedentarist gaze. The relatively fixed points of departure and arrival locations are being privileged in understandings of movement rather than mobile space of the line that connects them. In this view, movement can be explained by the relative push and pull factors of point A and point B (Cresswell, 2006). Under these assumptions, many contemporary running practices are nonsensical as they emerge without a need for locational displacement and are most often geographically pointless, commonly originating and finishing in the same location (see Cook et al, 2016a). Run-commuting however, is more in line with transport's derived demand, where the locational displacement undertaken can be explained if not necessarily the mode. Unpicking the ways the practices of running entangle with the practices of transport within run-commuting is an enticing prospect. As of yet however, no work within transport geography has dealt with running (barring occasional nods to its use – Fairnie et al, 2016; Millward et al, 2013; Schwanen and Mokhtarian, 2005a; 2005b; Song et al, 2013) despite the burgeoning interest in active travel (Pooley et al, 2013). Within these nods, running is either classed as a subset of walking or alongside walking and cycling in the latter but has not been investigated as its own mode of transport. As this project will show, running is a distinct form of mobility and warrants being understood as separate

but analogous to these other forms of active travel (see Jensen, 2013 on this argument too). Active travel has been cast and researched too narrowly and there are a range of other practices, run-commuting included, that could be better attended to in transport studies.

Since its spatial science heyday, transport geography has lost its centrality within geography arguably because it largely remained within the analytical framework of the 1960s quantitative revolution (Hanson, 2003). For many, transport geography is still associated with positivist analyses, assumptions and methods. Here, mobility is researched as consisting of rational mobile subjects and processes that are observable, testable and separable from wider meanings, histories, experiences and contexts. From these abstractions, universal laws can be derived (Cresswell, 2010). Although somewhat of a simplification given the diversity and vibrancy of work happening within contemporary transport geography (see Schwanen 2016, 2017, 2018 for review), transport geography has been predominated by a consideration of movement as a means to an end (Hall, 2008). The recent emergence of big data in transport geography is such an example (Schwanen, 2017). This understanding is perhaps the distinctive element that demarcates traditional transport geography from the new mobilities research. Transport geographers have classically studied movement as an act of locational displacement, lacking in meaning or context. Mobility scholars argue that movement is never just movement however; rather it is imbued with meanings and experiences (Adey, 2017). This movement-plus-meaning formulation is what produces *mobility* – something that is power-laden, meaning-saturated and set in social and cultural contexts (Cresswell, 2001).

Transport-mobilities continuum

In a series of papers in recent years (Shaw and Docherty, 2014b; Shaw and Hesse, 2010; Shaw and Sidaway, 2011), transport geographer Jon Shaw and colleagues have argued that this demarcation between transport and mobilities is something of a caricature. Rhetoric associated with the newness of the mobilities turn has resulted in polarising research conducted under the banners of transport geography and mobilities, conceiving them as paying attention to different facets of movement. This polarity is unhelpful; it strait-jackets approaches and masks significant diversity in research (Adey et al, 2012; Shaw and Hesse, 2010; Shaw and Sidaway, 2011). Rather,

a continuum has been proposed as a better conceptualisation of the relationship between mobilities and transport with commentators arguing that a more sophisticated approach to movement can be garnered through dialogue. This is something which is certainly on the up and initiating renewed vibrancy and nuanced understandings in both directions (Adey et al*,* 2011; Adey et al*,* 2012; Cresswell, 2011; Grieco and Urry, 2012; Shaw and Hesse, 2010; Docherty and Shaw, 2019). Value can certainly be gleaned from one another, whether in understanding the representations and embodiment of moving (mobilities) or in insights into the spatiality of movement, the wider societal processes underpinned by transport or in applied policy relevance (transport geography).

Shaw and Hesse conclude their 2010 commentary by contending that there are great advantages in trumpeting and developing the coincidences of interests between transport geography and mobilities research and I certainly agree. All mobile forms could be attended to more thoroughly and with greater and aptitude if drawing on approaches and interests from both transport geography and mobilities research. Not only would this garner a more comprehensive, multi-perspectival approach to movement but it would help also to overcome the rhetorical caricatures of each field and go beyond the dichotomy of sedentary and nomad theoretical approaches, which both have value in the study of movement. Understanding point A and point B can be just as important as understanding the line that connects them and exploring the relationship between them even more crucial. Such an approach is one well-suited to the study of run-commuting. Running is a practice emblematic of mobilities' approach to movement: it is an autotelic practice (Csikszentmihalyi et al, 2017) and geographically pointless, therefore unexplainable purely by traditional transport rationales (Cook et al, 2016a). Run-commuting on the other hand is a form of derived demand and can be explained by the push and pull factors of A and B. Yet the reason why running, as opposed to another form of transport, has been used to traverse A and B cannot be made sense of by traditional transport rationales and requires the insight gathered from mobilities' interests to fully explain this emerging mobile form. Understanding run-commuting requires insights from right across the transport-mobilities continuum.

As disciplinary perspectives from which to locate my research into run-commuting, mobilities and transport offer many valuable synergies and complementary approaches. Together, they provide the intellectual resources to guide and inspire

my exploration of run-commuting, offering useful ways of thinking in my endeavour to provide the first academic account of the practice. Mobilities offers a way of exploring the meanings, experiences, contexts and relationality of run-commuting, while transport offers ways of attending to run-commuting's spatialities, implications, facilitation and rationales. Beyond these, I will also draw influences from other fields that concern the moving body. These have not informed my approach to run-commuting but have been useful in making sense of it. I have found valuable work in the fields of sport, sport sociology and qualitative health studies, and in particular, work within physical cultural studies[1] and the recent revitalisation of sport geography[2]. Together, these disciplinary perspectives combine to offer a valuable approach to colouring in the blank canvas of run-commuting. How to actually realise and operationalise these diverse perspectives, multiple dimensions, and various potentialities however, is the subject of the next section of this chapter, which considers the value of frameworks in such endeavours.

Frameworks of Mobility

Bridging the various fields of transport geography and mobilities to effectively bring their perspectives to bare on understanding run-commuting comprehensively is not necessarily a straightforward task however. An approach is needed that has origins rooted in both disciplines but that also works as a whole, something Cresswell (2008; 2010) argues can lead to more holistic expositions of mobile practices. Understanding a practice holistically entails attending to various perspectives on the practice, to the diverse aspects which come together to produce the practice, and

[1] Physical cultural studies is a dynamic and rapidly developing field which takes as its prime focus the active body, exploring varied expressions of physical culture as embodied, contextual and in-process (Silk et al, 2017). Key overviews and conceptualisations can be found in Andrews (2008), Andrews and Silk (2011), Silk and Andrews (2011) and Silk et al (2017). Conversations between the fields of physical cultural studies and mobilities are limited but increasing, as seen in Thorpe (2012; 2014), Larsen (2019) and Phoenix and Bell (2019).

[2] A recent revitalisation of sport geography has changed its focus somewhat, now concerned with the everyday rather than the elite and finding enthusiasm in the taking place of sporting practices. Gavin Andrews (2017) refers to this as a switch from post-game to play-by-play, a move that has worked to animate the movement-spaces of geographical research into sport. Overviews and agendas of this revitalisation include Andrews (2017), Koch (2017; 2018), Hitchings and Latham (2017b), Coen et al (2020), Latham and Layton (2020) and Wise and Kohe (2020). For comparison, older reviews of sport geography include Bale (2000c), Bale and Dejonghe (2008) and Gaffney (2014).

to the effects that results from such practice. This is certainly an ambition for this project. The lack of knowledge about run-commuting thus far means there is little for the project to build on or an overall sense of what run-commuting is about. The complexities of mobile practices means that all aspects of run-commuting are ultimately entangled with one another – such as embodiment, movements, motivations, representations, actuations – and these are enwoven with the wider socio-cultural, political, economic and technological contexts in which they play out. As such, a narrow and detailed analysis of just one dimension may be futile in some regards as the wider contextual knowledge to make sense of that aspect is missing. Therefore, I contend that to gain a good understanding of the practice of run-commuting requires this project to cover many bases and work across the registers of transport and mobilities.

Yet the complexity and scale of holistic research ambitions led Ole Jensen (2013: p.9) to argue that they are "intellectually appreciative but often less useful when it comes to understandings a complex reality". Seeking to attend to all things and relations at play in a phenomenon risk becoming a "baggy everythingism of description and explanations" (Castree et al, 2013: p.423). Rather Jensen contends that frameworks offer analytical devices capable of grappling with this complexity and making sense of mobilities. All frameworks are reductive in nature; they simplify reality, contain deliberate delimitations and thus are open to criticism (Jensen, 2013; Shove et al, 2012). I am certainly sympathetic to such arguments but still see benefits of frameworks in understanding the complexity and comprehensiveness of practices. Frameworks are heuristics, offering ways of conceptualising phenomena and practices so their complex realities can be studied. Frameworks allow the entwined dimensions of practices to be analytically disentangled, permitting detailed research on individual aspects of the practices before their reassembly, providing significant insight into the practices as a whole.

Frameworks provide a means of comprehending run-commuting and to work across the transport, and mobilities synergies by building the concerns of each into the approach. As such, it is a strategy I wish to take influence from in this project. I will not, however, be adopting a framework within this thesis. While I appreciate their intentions and abilities to make complex realties researchable, I want to ensure there is room for ideas to develop that may otherwise be confined the boundaries of a particular framework. Rather, I intend to take inspiration from existing frameworks that offer useful intellectual resources for understanding run-

commuting and develop some key conceptual tropes that will guide my approach to run-commuting in this project. These will very much be grounded in the approaches of the frameworks I introduce, as well as the fields of mobilities and transport studies, but with less rigidity and more room for development.

In seeking intellectual resources capable of approaching run-commuting comprehensively and bridging transport geography and mobility studies, I have taken inspiration from three frameworks in particular. Here I would like to introduce Tim Cresswell's Production of Mobilities (2001; 2006; 2010), Ole Jensen's Staging Mobilities (2013; 2014), and Elizabeth Shove and colleagues' Dynamics of Social Practice (2012). These frameworks are analytical devices and interpretative structures that all point to a more holistic understanding of mobilities, enabling practices to be studied in a more encompassing way. By working across various registers of mobilities in this fashion, these frameworks also aid in overcoming some of the critiques made of mobilities research in recent years. Most notably in this regard, are the accusations that some mobilities research has produced overly-animated subjects with a focus on of movement, dynamism and flow above the multitude of other ways of experiencing, reporting and apprehending mobilities (Rose and Wylie, 2006; Bissell, 2007; Manderscheid, 2014; Merriman, 2014). As such, attention has been detracted from relatively less mobile yet similarly important aspects of mobility. These frameworks offer ways of avoiding such detractions by attending to the diversity of things entangled with mobile practices. All of the frameworks have been influential in their own right across mobilities and transport geography and, as I will argue, are not to be seen as competing frameworks but rather could be imagined as complementary. Each has developed for a different purpose and offers nuanced insights in the endeavour to comprehend mobile practices. The many ideas contained within these frameworks will all inform the key tropes of my approach to run-commuting, which are explored in the last section of this chapter.

The Production of Mobilities – Cresswell

The production of mobilities in an ongoing mesotheoretical construction of a geographical approach to human mobility by Tim Cresswell (2001; 2006; 2008; 2010). It developed as a reaction to the disparate, specific and often introspective

mobilities research being done in the early 2000s in a range of fields, such as dance, migrations and transport studies. This work revealed much about dancing bodies, migration motivations and commuter patterns for example, but revealed little about the greater context of such movement and had a relative lack of concern with mobility itself (see also Merriman, 2012). In Cresswell's view, geographers had well-developed notions of many key concepts – place, space, landscape – yet the same could not be said for mobility. There had been a reluctance to move beyond specific case studies to think about the nature of mobility and attempt to theorise it (Cresswell, 2008). Cresswell's aim was to provide a way of thinking that ties different processes of different human movements at different scales to a single logic of mobility, which still respected their important differences. Analysing the study of mobility throughout geography's history, Cresswell sought to make an analytical distinction between movement and mobility, movement being a function in abstract space and mobility as a meaningful and power-laden geographical phenomenon (Cresswell, 2008).

Theorising this conceptualisation of mobility began by thinking about mobility as produced, signifying that mobility is a social product, social in nature (Cresswell, 2001; 2002). Mobility does not just exist in an abstract world - it is social construct. In questioning how mobilities get produced both materially and in the imagination, Cresswell argues that mobilities can be thought of as an entanglement of movement, meaning and experience, each aspect representing a different way of understanding mobility (Cresswell, 2001; 2006). In doing so Cresswell brings together various traditions of mobile research (notably mobilities and transport geography) in an interpretative framework for thinking about human movement that is inherently more holistic. While completely entangled and co-constitutive, Cresswell (2006) argues that each facet may be studied in isolation for analytical purposes and that attending to the three components concurrently enables researchers to uncover complex relationships, explore nuanced connections between emerging facets and to tie the various literatures interested in mobility together. Jon Shaw and Iain Docherty (2014: p.32) are similarly taken by such a framework, arguing that the "getting from anywhere to anywhere in any circumstances is likely to be most insightful and accomplished if it is grounded in a good understanding of all three of Cresswell's triumvirate of" movement, meaning and experience:

- *Movement:* Movement concerns the brute facts of getting from one place to another that are the raw material for the production of mobilities;

mappable, measurable and, in positivist analysis, law derivable. In relation to run-commuting this would revolve around questions of who, where, when etc. This aspect of the framework most closely resembles a transport geography take on mobility in seeking to understand material movement and spatialities.

- *Meaning:* Representations give this movement a plethora of shared meanings that can be found in a great range of sources, from politics and planning documents to cultural narratives, which demonstrate that mobility is, at least partially, discursively constituted. The meaning-capturing and sense-making role of representations are not neutral processes or simple imaginings, they are often ideologically driven and have agency in the world. For this project, meanings will predominantly revolve around the ways representations of running as a sport/health pursuit, and mode of transport entangle to produce run-commuting. In studying meanings of mobility, this aspect of the framework is most closely aligned to the interests of the New Cultural Geography and cultural turn.

- *Experience*: Human mobility is practiced mobility that is enacted, embodied and experienced. In relation to run-commuting, the most obvious questions would concern its actualisation, its visceral physicality, the impact of materials on the runner, and the interaction with other space users and the environment itself. Cresswell (2010: p.20) posits that it is at the "level of the body that human mobility is produced, reproduced, and, occasionally transformed", a postulation which reflects more recent interest in mobility stemming from work in the theories of practice (Everts et al, 2011; Watson, 2012), (post)phenomenological enquiry (Ash and Simpson, 2016) and the microgeographies of non-representational theories (Lorimer, 2005; Anderson and Harrison, 2010; Simpson, 2017).

Cresswell argues that thinking about mobility as produced is to think of them as differentiated, that the framework has the power to illuminate and delineate the politics of mobility (Cresswell, 2010). Drawing on earlier work around power geometries by Massey (1993), here Cresswell brings his interest in citizenship to the study of mobility by arguing that mobility is a resource accessed differently and plays a role in the differentiation of society. The politics of mobility are not only present in the brute facts but in the meanings and experiences of that movement

also. This leads to a new societal hierarchy "based in the ways we move and the meanings these movements have been given" (Cresswell, 2008: p.139). As such, this study of run-commuting will seek to identify the differentiated social relations bound up in this mode of movement.

Finally, and importantly for run-commuting, Cresswell (2010) also argues that his framework allows the history of mobilities and the changing iterations of mobile practices to be taken seriously. He argues that the entanglements of movements, meanings and experiences have traceable histories and geographies that come together in constellations. At any one time particular constellations of mobility pervade – particular patterns of movement, meanings and ways of practice that make sense in their contexts (Cresswell, 2010). Run-commuting can be seen as an emerging constellation of running alongside the pervading constellation of sport/health running. Run-commuting may be set apart from sport/health running constellations due to the different material movements, despite potentially similar in meanings and experiences. Likewise, run-commuting may display similar movements to young people running to school in Kenya, or Ancient Greek messengers delivering reports from the battlefield, but the meanings and experiences of such movement are different and thus sets it apart as a different mobile constellation. Cresswell (2010: p.19) also remarks how "constellations from the past can break through into the present in surprising ways", something certainly true in this new manifestation of running for transport purposes.

In sum, Cresswell's production of mobilities contends that all forms of mobility have a physical reality, are encoded socially and culturally, and are experienced through practice that provide insights into the politics of mobility and into constellations of mobility. The three tenets of the production of mobilities framework must be explored to understand run-commuting, trying to understand mobility without recourse to each is to "miss the point" (Cresswell, 2006: p.4).

Staging Mobilities – Jensen

Unlike Cresswell's agenda, Ole Jensen's Staging Mobilities framework (2013) is not an attempt at developing a general theory of mobility, rather it is his intention to develop a framework capable of apprehending how mobilities actually happen *in situ*, an approach he terms mobile situationism. It is an investigation of ordinary and

concrete mobilities and Jensen's overarching argument is that these mobilities do not just happen. Indeed, the framework is Jensen's attempt to unpack the situational mobilities of everyday practices to see how they do take place. In particular, he asks what the "physical, social, technical, and cultural conditions to the staging of contemporary urban mobilities" are (Jensen, 2013: p.4).

Simultaneously, the development of the Staging Mobilities framework is Jensen's endeavour to bring the analytical mobilities field into greater contact with the interventionist disciplines of urban design, urban planning and architecture – forging an agenda for mobilities design. Jensen argues that such a coming together can be fruitful, shining a light on the sites and places hosting mobilities and how these mobilities actually take place. Theoretically, this is also feeds into Jensen's argument that to truly understand mobilities it is necessary to go beyond the dichotomies of mobilities and moorings, of sedentary and nomadic theories (Hannam et al, 2006). The sustained focus on movement in mobility studies has also led to an interest in relatively immobile things that are still vital to mobilities. Urry (2003; 2007; Hannam et al, 2006) considers this as a dialectical binary between mobilities and moorings expressing how mobility systems are underpinned and enabled by immobilities and infrastructural fixities (Adey, 2017). Indeed, Shaw and Hesse (2010) argue that mobility cannot be totally apprehended without grasping how moorings produce and facilitate mobilities – creating the 'spatial fix' as Harvey (1982) termed it. This is not a return to rootedness however (Cresswell, 2012). More exactly, it reflects endeavours to rethink and direct attention to stuff as vibrant and dynamic (see Anderson and Wylie, 2009; Bennett, 2010; Bissell, 2010a; Whatmore, 2006) that have incited a reconsideration of the dualism between mobilities and moorings. In this regard, Adey (2006) emphasises the value in attending to mobilities relationally and grappling with the connections, interdependencies and interactions between differently-mobile things.

Jensen positions the Staging Mobilities framework in a third space between mobilities and mooring, and nomad and sedentary theories. This is demonstrative of the influence relational geographical theories (Malpas, 2012) have had on Jensen's thinking as well as his affinity for the complex interrelatedness of things and people as apparent in assemblage (De Landa, 2006; Anderson and McFarlane, 2011; Anderson et al, 2012; McFarlane, 2011; McFarlane and Anderson, 2011) and actor-networks theories (ANT) (Whatmore, 2002; Latour, 2005). The conceptualisation of mobilities as being assembled into complex networks of social actors and

technical systems avoids Jensen's overarching concern, the question of how do mobilities happen, from being a purely instrumental affair. Rather, mobile situationism engages with the microecologies of *in situ* mobile practices, understanding them as assemblages of human subjects, physical design, material infrastructures and networked technologies, as instrumental, affective, emotional, creative and skilful, and as socially and culturally significant.

The Staging Mobilities framework is predicated on these theoretical and empirical postulations, leading to Jensen adopting the dramaturgical metaphors of Erving Goffman (1959) in arguing that mobilities are instead meticulously staged – staging that occurs from both above and below. This division is made for operational reasons rather than indicating any sense of power relationship or simple structure-agency. Indeed, Jensen argues that the actualisation of mobilities occurs in the dynamic process between staging from above by planning, design, regulations and institutions; and staging from below by individual performances of mobile self-representation and consociates in interaction. From this operational binary, the framework branches out to capture the dynamism of lived mobilities as they manifest in relation to three themes – physical setting, material spaces and design; embodied performances; and social interactions. Jensen argues that situational mobilities are an ongoing process of interaction between these dimensions:

- *Staging from Above*
    - *Physical setting, material spaces and design*: This aspect of the framework concerns the many non-human things, infrastructures and networked technologies which mediate mobilities from above, that design mobilities. Drawing on work in urban design and architecture, this focus asks how design affords or prevents particular mobilities and how the design of mobility systems influences the lived experiences of them. Jensen adopts a broad definition of design and designers in this framework, entailing that things both material and immaterial can work to stage mobilities. The built environment, planning documents, policy regulations, timetables, atmospheres, codes, technology, sounds, smells, signage, and those who create them are all considered as designers of mobility - having the ability to influence, host and organise flows of mobility. The influence of assemblage theory and ANT is evident here, treating the setting as an active force alongside human agency

in shaping situations; it is not just passive. Understanding how such settings stage mobilities also requires insight into the way humans interact with them: do they act as directed, or subvert the space for their own appropriation? For Jensen, the constantly emerging relations between human and non-human things coalesce to stage and re-stage mobile practices in particular situations. This way, (im)materials and technologies are as involved in the production of mobilities as the social relations and constructs that Cresswell discusses. For run-commuting practices, these materials and physical settings are likely to relate to the mobile spaces ran within, as well as the spaces either end of a commute, whose designs can facilitate or constrain run-commuting in different ways.

- *Staging from Below*
    - *Embodied performances*: Inspired by Goffman's (1959) notion of performativity, phenomenological inquiry (such as Seamon, 1979), and non-representational geographies (see Lorimer, 2005; Anderson and Harrison, 2010), this aspect of the framework targets the complex relationship between moving, sensing, emotional, skilful bodies, material sites, and modes of mobility. It begins from the position that mobile practices are modes of being in the world and it is at the level of the body at which the cultures of these practices are (re)produced. Therefore, mobile practices are something felt, enacted and lived that also contain huge cultural significance, embodying different cultural norms, rationalities, skills and forms of knowledge. The capacities displayed by mobile people demonstrate a form of co-ordination in motion, which asks researchers to attend to the way people move, and how they move in regard to the material site and others. Jensen places particular emphasis on the sensescapes of mobilities, arguing that the senses act as the interface between the mobile person, the physical settings, and mobile consociates. It is through the senses that people experience space, an experience altered through the fact of being on the move. This experiential dimension is also altered by the affective potential of the materials and technologies that people carry with them. They can act as extensions of the body in

mediating sensations and they can augment experiences, as well as impact upon the body itself and the embodiment of mobility. Studying run-commuting, this perspective asks how is run-commuting embodied, what does it feel like, how it is sensed, how do run-commuters negotiate space and others, and how are materials affective in the staging of their journeys?

- *Social interactions*: Mobile infrastructures do not just stage isolated mobilities, they carry the potential for social interaction. This interaction in turn, mediates mobility and the mobile experience as others permit or restrict and affects one's movement. In this sense, social interactions are an element in the politics of mobility. Understanding such negotiation in motion is a key aspect of how mobilities are staged from below. But they are more than just material meetings, they are meetings of different mobile subjects and embodied meanings. Mobile subjects is a notion which recognises that the way we move is constructive of our identity and mediates our subjectivities. As such, social interaction is not just a case of two abstract bodies meeting but is symbolic of wider cultural views on mobile types – whether they belong in particular settings and whether their mobility should be privileged or disadvantaged. Jensen highlights the many kinds of social interactions that can take place on the go – prolonged or ephemeral, intended or unintended, with friends or with strangers. His use of 'mobile-with' attempts to explore the different cultures of interacting with mobile consociates and how they relate to generic codes of mobility, tacit knowledges and local customs. Ultimately, those we have physical or virtual co-presence with us can help stage our movements. The rise of run-commuting has introduced a new mobile subject to the time-spaces of rush hours and the question of how run-commuters fit into this socio-material landscape and the interactions had with others on the go are vital in understandings its staging and taking place.

Despite establishing them as separate branches in the framework, Jensen clarifies that he is not setting up any omnipotent and isolated agents here, but rather seeks to emphasise the mediated, negotiated and constantly emerging nature of mobilities,

which stem from interaction between these three elements. Staging Mobilities foregrounds the interrelatedness of people, objects, spaces and interactions and in doing so, the framework draws attention to the physical, social, technical and cultural aspects of mobilities by asking how mobilities materialise. In the words of Jensen (2013: p.7): "The analytical perspective of Staging Mobilities explores who stages mobilities, and how, why, where and by which technologies, artefacts, and design principles does staging take place. Equally, the perspective engages with who are staged, how they perceive staging, how they enact or react in accommodating or subversive ways, how they feel about being staged and moved in particular ways and using particular modes of mobilities". All of these aspects could be studied in understanding how the run-commuter is assembled and the practice of run-commuting is staged as well as helping to unpick some of the politics of the mobility.

Dynamics of Social Practice – Shove, Pantzar and Watson

The final conceptual framework I wish to introduce is not one developed specifically for understanding mobilities, rather one for understanding everyday social practices more generally. The social practices approach exemplified in the framework by Shove and colleagues (2012) however, has proved popular with those analysing transport and mobilities. The Dynamics of Social Practice is an attempt to unearth the potential of theories of practice to understand change – how it happens, the conditions for it, and how to encourage it. To do so, the authors argue that a means of systematically exploring transformation and stability in, and between, social practices is needed and as such have developed a series of concepts that enable these dynamic aspects of social practices to be captured and understood. This framework thus not only offers a conceptualisation of social practices but is also a heuristic for analysing their qualities and for understanding how change does and can happen.

The theoretical background to this framework is rooted firmly in theories of practice and seeks to articulate a way these can inform methods for understanding social order, stability and change. Theories of practice advance ways of thinking about doing beyond understanding attitudes, choices, behaviours, and actions as results of direct mental processes or indeed anything simply individual (Watson, 2012). Rather these doings are considered as situated and composite, emerging out

of dialectics between actions, interactions and structures in specific socio-cultural-political-material contexts that form the central aspect of social life (Everts et al, 2011; Cohn, 2014; Nettleton and Green, 2014; Barnfield, 2016b). However, theories of practice are not a single perspective, rather they reflect the many theoretical expositions on the notion of practice as specific ways of doing and saying things by numerous theorists, from Wittgenstein, Heidegger, James and Dewey, to Taylor and Bourdieu, and more recently, Schatzki and Reckwitz. All have influenced Shove et al's understanding of practice, which aligns most closely with Reckwitz's (2002) suggestion that a practice consists of interdependences between forms of bodily activities, forms of mental activities, things and their use, background knowledge, know how, states of emotion, and motivational knowledge.

From this complex theoretical background, Shove et al have developed a relatively simple conceptual framework that draws together ideas assembled from a range of disciplines. Alongside the theories of practice influence, it is also important to highlight the Dynamics of Social Practice approach seeks to emphasise the material dimension of practices with literature in STS studies and ANT (Latour, 2005) proving important in recognising the constitutive role of things and materials in everyday life. The authors' interest in how elements of practices are constituted and change finds synergies with theories of innovation (such as Franke and Shah, 2003). Particularly relevant here is the observation that innovation is a constantly ongoing process, a lens Shove et al seek to understand practices under. Based upon this, Shove et al put forward their "slim-line version of practice theory" (2012: p.82), a framework that enables the complexity of practices and their stability and changes to be studied.

The Dynamics of Social Practice framework consists of three aspects: materials, competences, and meanings.

- *Materials*: the materials involved in practices are a diverse bunch of things including technologies, physical entities, the built environment and the stuff things are made of. In run-commuting, this could include trainers, clothes, routes, materials, GPS watches and bags that are involved in, affect, and help produce run-commuting.

- *Competencies*: competencies encompass the skills, know-how and techniques associated with accomplishing practices. Reckwitz (2002: p.251) argues that "a social practice is the product of training the body in a certain

way: when we learn a practice, we learn to be bodies in certain ways". As such, "a practice can be understood as the regular, skilful 'performance' of (human) bodies". Accomplishing run-commuting may include running and fitness competencies but also organisational and routing skills to make run-commuting possible.

- *Meanings*: this element draws on the representational aspect of practices, including symbolic meaning, ideas and aspirations. As mentioned earlier, perhaps the most defining meanings in understanding run-commuting are likely to be the representation of it as a sport, health and transport and the relationship between these.

Shove et al refer to these as the elements of practice and exploring the relationship between them allows us to understand how elements come together and practices form, or don't, and therefore the potential they have to change or continue. Practices form when connections between elements of these three types are made, in what the authors refer to as moments of doing. In any moment of doing, when a person is doing something, like run-commuting, they are actively integrating elements out of which practices are comprised. They are bringing together different competencies, materials and meanings, which in connection can form practices. This is practice-as-performance, where practitioner's doings help to produce and reinforce practices by integrating the same elements. If the elements of a practice become recognisable, then practices can also exist as entities, something that can be spoken about and drawn upon as a set of resources for those doing the practice or those wanting to. The successive performances of the practice then function to fulfil and reproduce the practice-as-entity and sustain it. There is thus a "recursive relation between practice-as-performance and practice-as-entity" (Shove et al, 2012: p.15).

However, moments of doing can also undo, remake and reconfigure practices. Should the links between elements be broken or alter during a moment of doing, should new or different competencies, materials or meanings be connected together or combined in new ways, than the recursive relationship between practice-as-performance and practice-as-entity is interrupted, leading to changes in the practice or possible new practices. In this way, exploring the elements of practice and their connections, how their links are made or broken, provides insights into the stability and instability of practices and why new practices emerge

and others are difficult to budge. This a valuable lens through which to consider run-commuting and its status as a practice with its own distinct elements and connections or whether it represents a transformation to the practices of running and the connections between the elements that comprise it (see Larsen, 2018b for an explanation of these). This question will be explored further in Chapter 4.

Also highly relevant to understanding run-commuting is Shove et al's contention that stability and change can emerge from the relations between practices, not just elements. Just as elements can link to form practices, practices can link to establish patterns, which act as the wider social structures or systems within which practices emerge/reform/change/disappear. Shove et al offer a useful way of thinking about such structures and their influence in practices. They suggest a consideration of practices as bundles or complexes informative for studying the connections between practices as well as the impacts of their collaboration or competition. They take bundles to represent looser-knit patterns of practices "based on co-location and co-existence", whereas complexes represent "stickier and more integrated arrangements including co-dependent forms of sequence and synchroni[s]ation" (Shove et al, 2012: p.17). The connections and entanglements practices have with other practices are crucial in understanding them, contributing differently to their enablement, engendering, constraint, restriction, sequencing and conditioning (Watson, 2012) as well as the spatial and temporal organisation of everyday life (Cass and Faulconbridge, 2016). These emergent bundles and complexes of practices impact on the formation of individual practices, with consequences for how the elements of a practice come together or don't, their continuity or change, and their tempo-spatial structuring. Given the entangled nature of commuting practices demonstrated in Chapter 1, and the additional entangling of running, the relationships between practices are key in understanding the rise of run-commuting and further establishes the Dynamics of Social Practice as a valuable approach through which to study run-commuting.

Key conceptual tropes

Outlined above are the three conceptual frameworks that have influenced my approach to run-commuting. The overviews give not only a summary of the purpose, theoretical positions and details of each framework but also an indication

of the questions they could ask of run-commuting, how they tie back into my abiding interests in understanding the practice in an holistic manner, and thus demonstrate their applicability to this PhD project. I am taken by each of these frameworks and see the benefits they could bring to the study of run-commuting comprehensively. However, in order to provide the flexibility and space for ideas to develop as well as to capitalise on benefits of approach, I will not be structuring this project using one of these frameworks. Rather, it is my intention to develop some guiding conceptual tropes from these frameworks that will inform my study of run-commuting. These key tropes have emerged from the complementary commonalities between all three frameworks, as well the wider disciplinary perspectives I am bringing to the study of run-commuting. In this way, these aspects form my approach to run-commuting in a way that enables a breadth and depth of study, and attending to the mobility of run-commuting in a more encompassing manner. There are nine guiding tropes that inform my approach to run-commuting in this project, which I outline briefly below.

- *Interdisciplinary*: Drawing on influences and ideas from a range of disciplines that hold movement and the moving bodies central to their enquiries is a key aspect of this project. All three frameworks discussed above emerged as the result of interdisciplinary engagement and thought. Jensen combined sociology, mobilities research and urban design, Shove et al engaged with sociology, theories of practice, theories of innovation, and science and technology studies, and Cresswell drew on work from geography, transport studies, cultural studies, sociology, social theory, the arts and humanities is developing his approach. My work will benefit from such boundary crossing conceptualisations, which I will seek to add to by engaging more directly with work in physical cultural studies, sport geography and wider sport and health research to understand running and run-commuting.

- *Mobilities as produced*: All of the frameworks conceptualised mobile practices as much more than instrumental movement from A to B. Mobile practices do not just exist in an abstract world, rather they are socially produced practices, constitutive of and constituted by socio-cultural relations. However, more than just the social is involved here, practices

are also produced in the interactions of the social with the material, immaterial and technological, as shown in Jensen's staging approach. I will apply this understanding of mobilities as socially and (im)materially produced to run-commuting, and throughout this thesis my use of the terms produced and production refers to these processes.

- *Relational and processual approach*: There was a common interest among the frameworks in employing relational and processual theories to understanding mobile practices. These theories strongly emphasise the co-constitutive and mutual entanglement of diverse phenomena in the construction of 'things' (relational) in ways that are always emerging as relationships between elements endure and reshape in different ways to result in more or less stability (processual). In this sense, every thing or phenomenon is constantly in a state of becoming. This is visible in Bissell's (2018: p.xix) ecological approach to the study of commuting, where he invites us to consider and sense how commuting is "entangled in a complex web of relations with other people, places, times, ideas and materials" in variegated and mutable ways rather than "imaging individual commuters as atom-like particles". These ideas have affinities to the affect theories introduced earlier and relational approaches, which are indicative of the complexity of mobile life and the multitude of things that influence and prove significant in mobilities. Such interests demonstrate the impact of post-humanist philosophies on mobilities (Adey et al, 2014). For example, ANT (Latour, 2005) has motivated an engagement with the complex and chaotic networks of humans and non-humans (Adey, 2006; Adey and Bissell, 2010). Mobilities are thought of plurally, reflecting the entanglement of one mobility with multiple others and the multitude of agents enmeshed with them (Adey, 2017). Combined with more processual thinking, the conceptualisation of mobilities as forms of assemblage has also risen in popularity. The thoughts of De Landa (2006) have been influential here and rather than accentuating the "essence of things", his ontology contends that the world is "constituted by processes" (Cresswell and Martin, 2012: p.517). Such processes align with a continual "becoming, a betweeness and an unfolding" (Merriman, 2012: p3) as things coalesce in mobilities in a process of assemblage (Adey and Bissell, 2010). Seen in this light, things are a "complex, changing, and

emergent product of interactions that are only partly planned, ordered or controlled" (Castree et al, 2013: p.25). In De Landa's assemblage theory, things coalesce to instigate movement (Merriman et al, 2013) that draws attention on the processes of relation. Such relations also necessitate that systems cannot be reduced to their component parts (Cresswell and Martin, 2012) and hence it is well-suited studying mobility more comprehensively. Relational and processual approaches, seem well-equipped to help rectify some of the critiques of the mobilities turn highlighted earlier, in illuminating the "endless chain of interlinked forms" (Harman, 2010: p.179) that "continually construct, deconstruct and reconstruct each other, offering forms of temporary stability coextensive with their potential collapse" that are mobilities (Cresswell and Martin, 2012: p517). Influenced by these arguments, I will approach run-commuting as a relational and processual practice in this project.

- *Changing mobilities*: In many ways relating to relational and processual approaches, all three frameworks placed a focus on understanding how practices are changing. It formed the *raison d'être* of Shove et al's attempts at conceptualising social practices, while Jensen sought to forge an agenda for looking at the potential of mobilities – thinking about how they may change in the future and how in turn, they may change societies. Cresswell's interest was not so much focussed on the future, although he does reference the becoming nature of mobilities, rather he approaches change in fostering an appreciation for historical mobilities and their links to contemporary practices. His notion of constellations of mobility encapsulates this interest and certainly has an affinity to the moments of doing identified by Shove et al – therefore it could also be appropriated for future-gazing and exploring conditions for stability and change in practices. There is further affinity found in mobility and transport studies wider interests in change and transition. In seeking to study the emergence, production and potential of run-commuting, there is not only an emphasis on how run-commuting itself is changing but how it represents changes to the wider changes of commuting and running. As an emerging practice, run-commuting is related to much older configurations of running and is being posited as a mobility of the future.

The resources for making sense of change laid out here will be valuable in understanding run-commuting.

- *Politics of mobility*: While this notion was developed by Cresswell (2010), the issues of justices, power, social relations, differentiation and acts of citizenship contained within and caused by mobilities were also a key aspect of Jensen's framework (in his consideration of the dark side of mobilities). More widely, this interest marks a key aspect of mobilities and transport research which have long been occupied with researching and seeking to overcome politics bound up in mobility (see Massey, 1993; Lucas, 2004). I seek to apply these interests in the social relations and repercussions of mobility to run-commuting.

- *Everyday mobilities*: All three frameworks emphasised the everyday, the mundane and trivial as hugely importance for not only understanding mobilities but as crucial aspects of the practices themselves. It is imperative to take background stuff of practices and places seriously. Much rides on the everyday for it is co-constitutive of wider social, cultural, economic and political processes/practices (Castree et al, 2013; Neal and Murji, 2015). The everyday speaks about how we live and what makes our lives liveable (Back, 2015). Such a focus is underpinned by the argument that the accumulation of millions of mundane individual decisions and actions have the potential to cause change in society. Influenced by these arguments, this project will take seriously the ordinary, everyday, mundane and sometimes boring experiences of run-commuting in understanding the practice.

- *Materiality*: The issue of stuff was a common element in both the Dynamics of Social Practices and Staging Mobilities frameworks. While Jensen engaged with these mostly as an act of staging from above – exploring the role the built environment, technology, semiotics, code and regulatory institutions had on the practices of mobility – Shove et al widen this to include the personal materials practitioners use and require. Such an emphasis recognises the agency of matter in producing and affecting mobilities, drawing influence, once more, from relational, post-human and assemblage theories. The materials and objects run-

commuters interact and relate to will be a vital matter of concern in the project.

- *Meaning*: The meanings and representations of mobilities was at the heart of Cresswell's theory of mobility, which recognises that ways of moving are culturally significant with many meanings attached to them. This representational element is also at the core of the Dynamics of Social Practice, while Jensen explores it through his strand of embodiment, exploring how mobile practitioners embody the range of values, imaginations, ideological codings, and messages attributed to their practices. Yet the meanings of mobility are not just held by its practitioners, those on the 'outside' also hold representations of mobility, which are not simply passive. These ideas about mobility do work in the real world; they drive actions, pervade thoughts, and influence decisions. Running as a means of transport is arguably is as much a provocation of meaning as it is of mobility and as such, grappling with how run-commuting is represented and understood differently will be a key aspect of the project.

- *Embodiment*: The physical doing of mobile practices was addressed by all frameworks. Jensen develops the fullest sense of how mobilities are embodied, embroiling the physical movements, meanings, cultural norms, perception of the environment, identity construction, and mobile subjectivities alongside the bodily experiences of sensations, feelings and emotions. Shove et al add another key element to this in the form of competencies – the skills and know how practitioners perform and embody. Whereas, Cresswell is more broadly concerned with the bodily geographies of mobilities. There is vastness and depth to experiences of moving that could be unpacked and explored in research about how mobility is lived, enacted and performed. Through influence from non-representational theories and theories of practice (among others), which Cresswell and Merriman (2011) argue are sensitive to movement, practice and embodiment (see also Jones, 2005; Spinney, 2006; 2009), mobility studies has devoted much attention to the matters of experience. I shall continue such efforts in this study of run-commuting,

> applying the widest conceptualisation of embodiment in hopes of attending to the experience of the mobile practice in the fullest sense.

Taken together, these key tropes underpin my own approach to studying run-commuting in this project. They have been influenced by synergies between the frameworks from Cresswell, Jensen and Shove et al that seek to understand (in different ways) mobile practices more comprehensively, relationally and processually. Within these tropes, there are wider affinities to be found with mobility and transport studies, between which this project is disciplinarily positioned. Collectively these tropes understand mobile practices as dynamic assemblages consisting of physical movements, cultural meanings and embodied experiences, which are affected by a huge range of things – physical, material, cultural, representational, immaterial, social and technological. Contained within these assemblages are issues of power and politics, as well as the potential for change within mobile practices and for these practices to change societies. As such, these guiding tropes have informed my approach to run-commuting in this project and in researching the practice. The next chapter continues to explore some of the questions raised at the beginning of this chapter regarding how to go about researching run-commuting but through a methodological lens.

Chapter 3

Methodologies and Methods

Attempting to understand a practice holistically that has not been reported on before and that is still emerging and changing presents some methodological challenges. What methods are capable of attending to the various dimensions of a practice when those dimensions are not yet known? What materials are there to understand an unknown practice through? How can you plan an appropriate research design when the subject matter is shifting? What is a suitable starting point? If forever chasing the subject matter, how can your research design be coherent and rigorous? These are some of the uncertainties, doubts and hesitations I faced in devising and conducting research into run-commuting in the manner detailed in the previous two chapters. The purpose of this chapter is to provide an overview and justification of the methodological decisions and processes undertaken in this project, which I hope respond to the above questions and enable me to fulfil my research questions, aims and objectives.

The chapter begins with an overview of the methodology of the project. In it, I conceptualise this project as a bricolage (after Denzin and Lincoln, 1994 and others) and demonstrate the appropriateness of this approach to studying the emergence of run-commuting. Ethnographic and mobile methodologies are then introduced as two major methodological approaches influencing the particular bricolage of this project. As is the nature of bricolage research, a wide variety of different methods were employed within the study. The second part of this chapter details the precise methods of data collection and analysis that actually feature in the thesis , providing the context within which the empirical material shown in Part Two and Part Three of this thesis were generated. The chapter ends with some considerations on my positionality within the research. Together, this chapter demonstrates how I've attempted to broadly study the mutable and currently mysterious practice of run-commuting in a rigorous and careful manner.

Before we begin, however, a quick note about the timeframe of the research is necessary. The whole project ran from October 2014 – November 2019 and broadly speaking, there were two distinct periods of research activity, which are split either side of a bicycle accident in 2018, the subsequent discovery of a pre-

existing kidney issue, and the ensuing recovery from both. Thus, the (initial) research design, recruitment and data collection generally took place before this and the data analysis and presentation occurred after returning from the interrupted period. Therefore, while the whole research project is five years in length, the data collected does not represent the entirety of this period.

Methodologies

Methodologies are the wider approach and organisation of a research project, through which specific data generation and analysis methods are operationalised. This section introduces three methodologies important to this project, one overarching methodology – bricolage – and two sub-methodologies important in crafting the bricolage of this project – ethnographic and mobile methodologies.

Bricolage

Bricolage is a critical approach to research that examines phenomena from multiple perspectives, be that theoretical or methodological, that has witnessed increasing popularity over the last two decades (Rogers, 2012). It is an intellectual project set forth by Levi-Strauss (1966) who employed the metaphor to denote the creative re-use of leftover materials by craftspeople to construct new artefacts. As a methodological metaphor, this influenced further conceptualisations by Denzin and Lincoln (1994; 2000; 2005), Kinchloe (2001; 2005) and Berry (2006), and a critical synthesis by Rogers (2012). Together, these conceptualisations show bricolage as an eclectic approach to qualitative research, mirroring the work of the bricoleurs Levi-Strauss described, by engaging in a complex stitching together of different dimensions of inquiry.

There are various key traits of a bricolage approach that make it an appropriate methodology to employ in researching run-commuting. Of the five types of bricolage conceptualised by Denzin and Lincoln (2000), two are particularly resonant to the approach adopted in this project. Firstly, interpretivist bricolage. This reflects an approach that does not believe there to be one correct telling of any phenomenon/event/practice; rather each telling represents a different

perspective on it (Rogers, 2012). This lays down two significant impetuses for research. Firstly is the need to identify and reflect on your positionality as a researcher to consider the influences on and partialness of your tellings. Secondly, is to bring multiple-perspectives to bear on a phenomenon. There are a multitude of different ways of knowing a phenomenon and entering a dialogue between different disciplinary, theoretical, methodological and subject perspectives can be vital in grasping the phenomenon as broadly as possible, increasing the opportunities for sense-making (Warne and McAndrew, 2009; Rogers, 2012). In these ways, interpretivist bricolage respects the complexities of both subject matters and research processes (Denzin and Lincoln, 2000; McLeod, 2011). These elements are important in understanding run-commuting. As the first in-depth academic account of the practice, there is a need to bring as many perspectives as possible to increase the comprehensive nature of the research and to reflect on my perspectives within this telling.

As noted above, one way to apply multi-perspectival approaches to run-commuting is through methodological pluralism and eclecticism. Methodological bricolage in the second type of bricolage identified by Denzin and Lincoln (2000) and relates to the combining of multiple research tools, methods and materials to engage in rich and critical inquiry and to avoid monological forms of knowledge (Kinchloe, 2005; Warne and McAndrew, 2009; Rogers, 2012). Methodological bricoleurs attempt to produce as complete a picture as possible from whatever resources are available to them. If appropriate, they may even construct new instruments and methods in response to or to look for new perspectives (Lincoln, 2001; Hammersley, 2008; Fincher et al, 2011). This has much resonance for researching run-commuting. A desire for an extensive understanding of the practice invites methodological eclecticism to take collective advantage of what each method makes more visible and dampen those they make less visible through pluralism. The materials available to understand run-commuting through have also changed throughout the project, and as such, new methods have been used or fashioned to respond to these.

This links to the last, and perhaps most relevant, trait of bricolage methodologies I am seeking to harness in researching run-commuting. Bricolage approaches are characterised by an emergent research design (Wibberley, 2012). There is a changeability and flexibility needed in bricolage approaches, an open-ended and engaged exploration, as the research design reconfigures itself in response to unforeseeable changes in the subject matter and the research process (Yardey,

2008; O'Regan, 2015). These reconfigurations may include adding new methods to the toolkit or analysing new materials and forms of representation. As such, adopting a bricolage approach demands eschewing concrete and rigid research plans in the process of knowledge production, instead opting for flexibility and fluidity (Rogers, 2012). Run-commuting is an emerging practice. By its very nature it is a changing phenomenon that offers mutable ways of knowing and understanding the practice, and therefore bricolage is highly apposite.

These dimensions of bricolage make it an appropriate methodology to adopt for researching the emerging and currently enigmatic practice of run-commuting. As nicely summarised by Rogers (2012: p.1) "when used as a metaphor within the domain of qualitative research, bricolage denotes methodological practice explicitly based on notions of eclecticism, emergent design, flexibility and plurality". In following Wibberley's (2012) call for considerations of how each specific bricolage has been built to be incorporated into work, I wish to provide a quick overview of how my own bricolage has emerged and the unforeseen changes that have influenced this.

Run-commuting was not the original topic of this thesis, rather it was pitched as a wider exploration of running geographies. So run-commuting itself was an unforeseen occurrence, something I stumbled across after moving to London and encountering the practice in a way I had not seen before. My MA dissertation began my investigations of it and prompted the switch in focus for the PhD itself. Initially, I imagined I would employ similar methods to those planned for the original PhD in my new project, namely the mobile methods of go-along interviews and mobile-video ethnography. As I engaged with run-commuting practices however, other possibilities began to emerge. The rising prominence of run-commuting on social media offered new materials to analyse as well as an easier-to-reach population, prompting the addition of virtual ethnography and a survey to the research design. Run-commuting schemes, promotions and organisations began to be established over the course of the project, which offered an alternative perspective to that of practitioners I could engage with. Wearable technologies became cheaper and more widespread in running practices, offering opportunities to understand run-commuting from a bio-tracking and self-quantification perspective. During the life of this project, I also started a job at Birmingham City University and thus had the opportunity to establish my own run-commuting practices, so authoethnography became a dimension of the bricolage. This was also promptly stopped after being

hit by a car. Throughout the project, I was open and responsive to these unforeseen changes, resulting in elements being added to the bricolage. However, further changes have conversely shrunk the bricolage too. The process of going from data collection to presentation involves a selection and refinement of ideas and materials with priority being given to aspects that most centrally answer research questions. Consequently, while all the methods just mentioned were used in the project, not all will appear in the data and analysis presented in this thesis. As such, autoethnography, mobile video ethnography, virtual ethnography and bio-tracking are not introduced within this chapter. These omitted methods still bear influence on the ideas and analyses that have been included however. It was often through such wide methodological triangulation that the validity of an idea emerged and, where appropriate, I will also draw on some of these to illustrate points generated by other methods. As such, these omitted methods are outlined in Appendix 1.

In sum, and reworking O'Regan (2015), my research project emerged as type of creation, its components found and sought, collaged, quilted, pieced and cobbled together from ideas, readings, interviews, media articles, tweets, images, participation, technologies, videos, audio files and transcriptions to create something new in the exploration of the emergence, production and potential of run-commuting.

Ethnography

Although not all methods used within this project fit within these, there are two further methodologies that have influenced the approach and organisation of this bricolage. The first of these is an ethnographic methodology. Ethnography is widely employed in qualitative geographic research (Hitchings and Latham, 2020a). Ethnography is a methodological approach that seeks immersive, rounded and nuanced analyses of social and cultural phenomena, understanding how they are constituted and continuously unfolding (Castree et al, 2013). In this way, ethnographic studies are a way to address the complexity, interconnectedness and richness of life, understanding how people create and experience their worlds within this (Hoggart et al, 2002; Watson and Till, 2010). This is well suited to the aims of this project and many of the methods employed in this study can be regarded as broadly ethnographic.

Methodologically, ethnography places emphasis on immersion and plurality. While often defined by, and sometimes conflated with, participant observation, this is just one method among a multitude that can be involved in ethnography (Hammersley and Atkinson, 2007). Ethnographies draw on a myriad of source materials that complement each other in researching lifeworlds, including participation, listening, observations, in-depth interviews, documents, artefacts, materials, conversations, and diaries among others (Watson and Till, 2010; Castree et al, 2013). The authority researchers claim in their ethnographic approaches usually stems from two sources (Hitchings and Latham, 2020a). The first is the length of time spent engaging ethnographically in the field, where the aim is to participate in the everyday life of the socio-cultural phenomenon being studied, to listen, watch, ask, collect and analyse through closeness to the phenomenon (Hoggart et al, 2002; Laurier, 2010). The second is the depth and quality of specific data collection events, such as interviews or observation events, rather than total time spent in the field (Hitchings and Latham, 2020a).

My own ethnographic approach to this study draws on both of these forms of authority. I have been ethnographically engaged in run-commuting cultures and practices for five years. This has entailed observing, watching, listening, reading, talking, collecting and participating (see more in Appendix 1) in the practices and with practitioners of run-commuting, whether that be online or on the ground itself. While this was neither continuous nor systematic in approach, it is an immersion that developed a keen attunement to the practice, the ways it developed and changed, and greatly aided in grasping the practice as this project hopes to do. More practically, this wider long-term ethnographic engagement with run-commuting has informed my specific data collection events (such as interviews), increasing their quality and depth. New themes and ideas for consideration were revealed through my ethnographic sensibilities, rooting questions more fully in the contexts of the practice. This also highlighted new tools or materials possible to understand run-commuting through, and thus is the foundation of the emergent research design and development of this bricolage.

As well as ethnography, the second key methodological approach that sits within this project's bricolage are mobile methodologies. Mobile methodologies are an innovation of the mobilities turn, albeit a contested one (Merriman, 2014). Work within the mobilities turn, as discussed in the last chapter, has emphasised the embodied experience of mobilities, facilitating questions regarding the sensory, emotional and fleeting experiences of movement (Büscher and Urry, 2009). The ability of traditional research methods to comprehend these textures of mobility, as well as their mobile nature, have been questioned (Law and Urry, 2004). Associated with the mobilities turn is the rise of mobile methods, a suite of different methods, which invariably attempt to 'keep up' with the practices being studied through tracing, tracking, and moving-with. This is a development based on the argument that spatial and temporal proximity brings methodological value to a study (Cook et al, 2016b). Tools that have been added to geographers' and mobility scholars' methodological arsenals over recent years include: mobile video ethnography (Spinney, 2011; Simpson, 2014), go-along interviews (Anderson, 2004; Finlay and Bowman, 2017), mobile ethnography (Kusenbach, 2003; Novoa, 2015), GPS tracking (Bell et al, 2015; Merchant, 2017), photo-elicitation (Middleton, 2010), phone-tracking (Taylor, 2016) and autoethnography (Larsen, 2014) among others. Beyond geography and mobility studies, the influence of such mobile methodologies is also being felt in transport research (Harada and Waitt, 2013; Oksansen et al, 2015) and is beginning to become apparent in health, sport and physical cultural studies too (Palmer, 2016; Goodyear, 2017; Ireland et al, 2019).

I draw on mobile methodologies in this project, not as *the* answer to researching mobilities but as one way of being able to research and understand mobile practices. As all methods make some things more visible at the expense of others, I see mobile methodologies as offering an important perspective to the bricolage but are not an imperative methodological innovation capable of unlocking previously unattainable dimensions of mobilities (D'Andrea et al, 2011). There are many outstanding works in mobilities studies that do not use such mobile methods. In doing so, I follow Shaw and Hesse's (2010) call for critical reflection about mobile methodologies and respond to Merriman's (2014) caution against the denunciation of the 'conventional'. In the project, both conventional and mobile methods have been

employed to understand the rise of run-commuting, both contributing different perspectives to the methodological bricolage.

This outlines the methodological approach I have adopted to my research into run-commuting. It is a methodological and interpretivist bricolage marked by eclecticism, plurality, flexibility and an emergent research design. Within the bricolage, I take particular influence from ethnographic and mobile methodologies in seeking to immerse myself into run-commuting practices in rounded, nuanced and mobile ways. Together, this methodology gifts me an approach capable of attending to the currently unknown and changing practice of run-commuting as holistically as possible, bringing multiple perspectives to bear on my telling and retellings of run-commuting, and able to respond to the changing nature of the phenomena itself. The project and all of the methods mentioned were given ethical approval and the research was conducted in line with Royal Holloway's and the ESRC's ethical guidelines. The next section will provide an overview and justification of the primary methods used in the presentation of this thesis and their specific use in researching run-commuting.

Methods

In total, seven research methods were used in the project, simultaneously in places, alongside the wider ethnographic engagement noted above. However, three were principal in the presentation of this thesis (survey, interviews and go-along interviews) so these will be overviewed and justified in this chapter where I discuss data collection, analysis, recruitment and sampling methods for each where relevant. The supplementary methods are outlined in Appendix 1.

Making these methods supplementary served to shrink the bricolage, enabling the wide-ranging and extensive exploration of this project to become more feasible and better presentable in the bounds of this thesis. Desiring a comprehensive account of the emergence, production and potential of run-commuting from the most central and extensive sources, I decided to foreground the interviews and surveys with run-commuters in the analysis and presentations of this thesis. These methods prioritised participants' voices and offered the rich description and data saturation sought in this project. As such, other methods used in the project were given less emphasis, including autobiography, virtual ethnography, mobile video ethnography,

bio-tracking and interviews with organisations. These supplementary methods were less central in developing the arguments of the thesis but are explained Appendix 1 as they still bear influence on the ideas and analyses that have been included in the thesis. It was often through such wide methodological triangulation that the validity of an idea emerged. Where appropriate, I will also draw on some of these supplementary methods to illustrate points generated by other methods.

Survey

With a massive lacuna existing about even the most basic information about run-commuting, a survey was employed in the project in order to generate broad contextual data, which the more fine-grained qualitative data elsewhere in the thesis could be situated within. An important tool for many decades in geography, surveys are recognised to be an efficient means of gathering information about people's lives where the focus is breadth rather than depth due to the standardisation of questions and responses elicited (McLafferty, 2010). Although a predominantly quantitative tool, surveys can still sit within bricolage research as they provide another perspective to stitch together and can be integral in understanding the situatedness and context of the phenomena in question.

The Big Run Commuting Survey was my device for beginning to fill in these broad level details about the practice. It was an online survey that ran from 02 May 2016 – 31 January 2017 aimed at collecting responses regarding run-commuting from current, former and potential run-commuters (though this thesis itself will only include current run-commuters). This survey ran on the platform Survey Monkey and was extremely wide-ranging, seeking to understand the brute facts, motivations and facilitations of run-commuting and how run-commuting sat with home, work and commuting lives. In total, there were 208 questions in the survey, including mostly fixed-response questions and some open-ended ones too that enable standardised and easily-comparable data in the former and unconstrained answers in the latter (McLafferty, 2010). However, as most of the survey filtered three ways – current, former and potential – respondents did not have that many to answer and it took between 15 – 20 minutes to complete on average. Conducting an online survey has many benefits in the ease of design and distribution, ease of survey completion, data collection and analysis, and the low costs to administer it (Madge

and O'Connor, 2004). However, it also presents some issues and skews in excluding those without internet access and in assuring the respondents are of the intended population (McLafferty, 2010).

The intended population for the survey was UK run-commuters present, past and future. This is an unknown population and therefore convenience sampling was employed to administer the survey. This was primarily done through online distribution on social media and the onward snowballing that occurred from that. For an unknown population, this is a common and efficient sampling technique (Etikan et al, 2016). I also recruited some survey respondents in person, albeit far fewer than through online means. Armed with business cards with links to the survey, I spent three days in the morning and evening rush hours traversing common run-commuting routes of London (informed by a Strava heat map – see Figure 9.7) to hand out business cards to those I thought were run-commuting. While both of these modes of recruitment along with the convenience sample are likely to introduce high levels of bias into the survey (particularly a London-skew), these are still appropriate methods to use when lacking a sampling frame and it is not possible to apply more rigorous sampling methods. However, as this survey is not intended to provide concrete generalisations about run-commuting rather a suggestive portrait of it, these are acceptable limitations for this project.

In total, 668 responses were collected, of which 424 (63%) were completed. By this, I mean the end of the survey was reached, not that all questions were answered. Participants were allowed to skip any questions they wanted. Incomplete surveys were excluded as not enough data would have been reported to judge if they met the intended population. As I was only interested in the responses from UK run-commuters, I then excluded the 61 responses from other countries, and then filtered again by run-commuting status to be left with the 287 current UK run-commuters who completed the survey (79% of UK respondents). This is the working sample analysed and presented to provide indicative findings about run-commuting in the UK. Analysis was conducted using Survey Monkey's in-built analysis tools, concentrating on descriptive statistics and cross-tabulation rather than inferential statistics due to the nonprobability nature of convenience sampling. The data generated from this survey and analysis are predominantly presented in Part Two of this thesis, which aims to provide a portrait of run-commuting in the UK.

Interviews

Alongside the survey, interviews were the method most influential in the findings reported in this thesis, as indeed they are in wider qualitative geography (Hitchings and Latham, 2020b). To complement the survey, I harnessed interviews as a methodological tool in the search of depth of run-commuting insights. Talking with people is a key ethnographic method and has been shown to be an excellent way of gathering information, to understand how people experience and make sense of life, to thoroughly probe issues, and to grasp the meanings, perspectives, experiences and geographies of social life (Valentine, 2005; Longhurst, 2010; McDowell, 2010; Dowling et al, 2016).

Two different types of interview were conducted in this project. The first were 'conventional' interviews conducted with participants in person or over Skype if necessary. The second were go-along interviews, which is introduced separately in this chapter. I note these now, as participants who took park in go-along interviews also had a 'conventional' interview beforehand. The 'conventional' interviews conducted with run-commuters were in-depth semi-structured interviews that lasted between 45 minutes and 3 hours, though more commonly between 1 hour and 2 hours 15 minutes. They explored similar themes to those covered in the survey but in greater depth and with more flexibility for participants' thoughts and responses to direct the interview. In total, 18 run-commuters took part in 'conventional' interviews about their run-commuting practices and experiences (seven as part of a multi-stage interview process) between December 2016 and July 2017, totalling 28 hours 40 minutes. A further 12 interviews (totalling 10 hours 20 minutes) were also conducted with organisations currently or potentially involved with run-commuting, spanning the spheres of transport, health, sport and run-commuting specific organisations. Although interesting and important, this interview material will not be presented in this thesis as practitioners' perspectives on run-commuting will be foregrounded instead.

Interview participants were recruited through the survey, identified by those who responded affirmatively to a question asking if they wished to take part in further research. In September 2016, after the survey had been running for four months, a data snapshot was downloaded and a sample from this was approached for interview. The sample was a form of maximum variation sampling, in which I attempted to achieve as wide a variety of participants and their run-commuting

traits as possible. In theory, this could provide a wide an assortment of practitioner perspectives on run-commuting, enabling a greater understanding to be achieved (Etikan et al, 2016). The first consideration here was geography. Both for research feasibility but also to explore any particular place-factors at play in the production of run-commuting, I identified the five most common locations respondents came from at the point of the snapshot – London, Birmingham, Leeds, Edinburgh and Cambridge – and constructed a sample around these. Three interviewees were desired from each location, with at least one also going on to do a go-along interview too. Due to the high percentage of responses from London, more were selected from here, eight in total with four also doing go-along interviews. After geography, I next wanted a roughly equal split between the gender of respondents and then a heterogeneity in their ages, job types, living situations and the attributes of their run-commuting journeys. These were some of the aspects of everyday life my ethnographic engagement up that point had indicated might be affective in the production of run-commuting.

As such, survey respondents who opted-in for further research participation and lived in the target cities, were categorised by the various attributes above and then a random number generator identified the person I approached to take part in the interviews. If no response was received or the participant declined, an alternative randomly selected person who fulfilled similar criteria was then approached instead. In total, this was required in four instances, twice due to no responses, once due to injury (go-along interview) and once due to incongruous diaries. In the end, I conducted two interviews fewer than planned, with one interview spot in Edinburgh and one in London not filled. Ultimately, this did not impact the findings of the project, as saturation point was reached when coding with the interviews already undertaken. A summary of the interview participants and some of their key characteristics is provided in Table 3.1. I will refer you back to this later in the thesis when interview quotes are drawn on. To aid the preservation of anonymity, each participant has been given a pseudonym, which is also visible in Table 3.1.

All of the interviews, regardless of interview type, were audio-recorded and then transcribed (mostly by an external transcription service). I then undertook coding of the transcription, using Nvivo Pro 11, in order to analyse the materials and identify emerging themes in the empirical data. Coding is a sense-making process consisting of assigning interpretive tags to text, evaluating and organising the data in order to understand the meanings within it (Cope, 2010). Given the bricolage

Table 3.1 Overview of interview participants

Pseudonym	Location	Gender	Age	Profession	% run-commute ran	Living Arrangements	Interview date	Interview Type
Callum	Leeds	Male	30-34	Charities and voluntary work	Whole journey	Two parent unit with young children	26-06-2017	Conventional
							26-06-2017	Go-along
Carl	London	Male	25-29	Marketing, advertising and PR	Whole Journey	Single, house sharing	13-04-2017	Conventional
							19-04-2017	Go-along
							26-04-2017	Follow up
Dominic	Birmingham	Male	30-34	Engineering and manufacturing	Mix it up	Married with no children / cohabiting	27-12-2016	Conventional
Fiona	London	Female	40-44	Hospitality, tourism and sport	Whole journey	Married with no children / cohabiting	10-01-2017	Conventional
Harriet	Edinburgh	Female	30-34	Teaching and education	Whole journey	Single, living alone	22-06-2017	Skype
Holly	London	Female	55-59	Transport and logistics	Whole journey	Two or more job household	16-12-2016	Conventional
							19-12-2016	Go-along
							11-01-2017	Follow up
Jamie	Cambridge	Male	30-34	IT and information services	Under half	Single, living alone	10-05-2017	Conventional
Lara	Leeds	Female	35-39	Teaching and education	Under half	Married with no children / cohabiting	15-02-2017	Conventional
Lisa	London	Female	35-39	Teaching and education	Mix it up	Two parent unit with independent children	23-03-2017	Conventional
							26-04-2017	Go-along
							02-05-2017	Follow up
Malcolm	Cambridge	Male	35-39	Health and social care	Under half	Two parent unit with young children	09-01-2017	Conventional
Mia	Birmingham	Female	25-29	Energy and utilities	Whole Journey	Married with no children / cohabiting	18-05-2017	Conventional
							19-05-2017	Go-along
Oliver	Edinburgh	Male	30-34	Hospitality, tourism and sport	Whole journey	Other	20-07-2017	Skype
Phillip	London	Male	50-54	Marketing, advertising and PR	Whole Journey	Two parent unit with older children	20-06-2017	Conventional

Richard	Leeds	Male	18-24	Health and social care	Whole journey	Married with no children / cohabiting	14-02-2017	Conventional
Sam	London	Male	45-49	Charities & Voluntary Sector	Whole Journey	Two parent unit with young children	16-01-2017	Conventional
							19-01-2017	Go-along
							20-01-2017	Follow up
Sara	Leeds	Female	40-44	Business, consulting and management	Whole journey	Two parent unit with young children	15-02-2017	Conventional
Sienna	London	Female	25-29	Marketing, advertising and PR	Whole journey	Single, house sharing	20-01-2017	Conventional
Sofia	Cambridge	Female	30-34	IT and information services	Whole journey	Single parent with young children	10-05-2017	Conventional
							11-05-2017	Go-along
Tyler	Birmingham	Male	50-54	IT and information services	Whole journey	Married with no children / cohabiting	18-02-2017	Conventional

nature of this research, initial thematic codes had already been developed from analysis and interpretation of the survey. These were added to, refined, altered and honed through the process of coding interview transcriptions. Saturation point was reached when no new themes were emerging as coding continued, resulting in 463 codes being identified of both a descriptive and analytical nature. These codes developed and coalesced into new themes, as well as contributing to and altering pre-identified themes, which have then served as the main topics explored in this thesis. Throughout the presentation of these findings, I will draw heavily on interviews quotes where I refer to participants' pseudonyms (as well as my own name when in conversation). This is a methodological desire to give voice to my participants, to allow their telling and perspectives to come through verbatim and respect their narrations as partners in this research.

Go-along interviews

As already mentioned above, seven of the run-commuters in the project also undertook a go-along interview after their 'conventional' interview. The aim of

having these two stages was to tailor the questions asked in each to the nature of each interview type. In essence, I employed go-along interviews to interrogate run-commuting routes and experiences and saved the wider questions around run-commuting practices for the more conventional interview, to give appropriate time to both. As the recruitment, sampling and analysis methods were identical to that described above, this brief explanation of go-along interviews will focus on what they are, why I chose to do them, and how I actually conducted them. I should also note that two further methods were used (mobile video ethnography and bio-tracking) simultaneously to go-along interviews. These were used (but not presented here) as data sources in themselves and, for four of the participants, a form of elicitation where a third interview after the go-along was also conducted (as outlined in Appendix 1)

One mobile method at use in this project, go-along interviews are interviews conducted on the move with participants. This often involves the researcher participating in the practice being studied and experiencing the places and spaces within which a practice may take place (Anderson, 2004). Go-along interviews can offer a greater depth compared to ordinary interviews due to the increased temporal and spatial proximity to the phenomena of interest. Interviewing participants about their thoughts, feelings, experiences and actions at the point at which they are taking place and can result in rich insights into experiences (Finlay and Bowman, 2017). The multi-sited nature of a go-along interviews also means that the spaces and places encountered can act as stimuli, helping to conjure memories, prompt further reflection, and provide useful/surprising distractions (Evans and Jones 2011; Holton and Riley 2014). The deeper understanding garnered through this is strengthened further by the increased levels of rapport that can be developed between researcher and participants (Cook et al, 2016a). In go-along interviews, the researcher and participants are engaging in a joint activity, which enters the participant's world. In these instances, participants become the experts and a more familiar environment can increase the comfort of participants, resulting in more evocative, unfiltered and honest insights being gained. The opportunities to engage with the experiences of runner-commuters in a way which could account for the varied attachments they feel with places/spaces and in a manner which is comfortable for them is what interested me in using go-along interviews to investigate run-commuting.

There are multiple challenges involved with taking go-along interviews on the run, although it is becoming increasingly common (see Cook et al, 2016a; McGahern, 2019; MacBride-Stewart, 2019a). Unfortunately, there is not space for an in-depth discussion of these challenges and possible solutions here (though see Cook, 2020) but just in terms of practicalities, this is how I set up the go-along interviews. Both the participant and myself had individual microphones, meaning we could separate on the run (as often necessary in urban running) without any issues. This was a tie-clip microphone, attached to the run-commuters top, close to their mouth and plugged into individual audio recording devices stored in a pocket/backpack/bum-bag, which produced clear and background-free audio. Participants were asked to suggest a convenient run-commute for me to join them on and after meeting at home/work and setting up equipment, we began running. These joint runs lasted between 35 minutes and 1 hour 50 minutes (and totalled 7 hours 47 minutes) and were completed at conversational pace, an undefined speed that means both runners can hold a conversation without becoming breathless. Run-commuters took me on their usual routes and the dialogue was very loosely structured. This not only speaks to the difficulties in having a physical interview schedule to hand when running but also for my desire to allow topics to adapt to changing situations, and for questions to evolve from spontaneous encounters on the run. The interview was designed to be quite unruly and open to distractions, as many go-along interviews attempt to do (DeLyser and Sui, 2013). I really wanted the run-commuting and run-commuters to lead the discussions. In doing so, run-commuters took me into their run-commuting worlds, which generated rich insights presented predominantly in Part Three of this thesis.

These three methods have contributed most principally to the bricolage presented in this thesis. Although other methods have also contributed to the overall development/triangulation of ideas and may feature where appropriate, fuller explorations of the data generated from the methods outlined in Appendix 1 will have to occur in other forums. Influenced through bricolage, ethnographic and mobile methodologies, surveys, interviews and go-along interviews are chiefly presented due to the different perspectives on run-commuting they may afford. In the hope of understanding the blank canvas of run-commuting as broadly, comprehensively and rigorously as possible, the methods employed aim to generate a breadth and depth of understanding about run-commuting, in ways that can keep up with its mobile and embodied nature, as well as leaving space for participants to tell their stories and direct the research. Before we embark on exploring the

findings these methods generated, I want to have a quick discussion about my positionality within this research.

Positionality

An imperative catalysed by feminist critiques of the traditional principles of objectivity, neutrality and value-free in academic work (Castree et al, 2013), recognising and reflecting on your own position in relation to your research is vital. All knowledge is situated and partial, influenced by who we are, our perspectives and experiences, and it is essential these be written into our research accounts (McDowell, 1992; Rose, 1997). There are synergies here also to the bricolage methodology, in recognising that the "complex, dense, reflexive collage-like creation … represents the researcher's images, understandings and interpretations of the world or phenomenon under analysis" (Denzin and Lincoln, 2005: p.6). The run-commuting bricolage presented in this thesis is a perception, how I, as the researcher, see run-commuting. As the sense-maker in this project, these are ultimately my interpretations and the influences affecting the knowledge I produce need expounding (Warne and McAndrew, 2009; Craddock, 2020).

While the big 'P' positionality issues around identify and personal characteristics, as Hitchings and Latham term them (2020b), are important to the way I perceive and interpret the material in this project (I am a white, middle-class, highly educated, urban dwelling, male), it is actually the little 'p' issues about how I relate to participants and the subject matter in the project that are perhaps more noteworthy. To begin with, I am a runner and have been for almost my whole life. Thus, I consider myself as something of an insider in running practices, somebody technically and culturally competent in running practices. This has aided the undertaking of some methods (notably the go-along) and enabled the exchanging of cultural capital for easier access to participants and an ability to speak their language. Being an insider will inevitably also inform the understanding, interpretation and presentation of everything offered throughout this thesis. There are ideas I may take as given and uninteresting, being more inclined to focus on those I see as different or curious, meaning I could miss important elements that others would direct attention to. While I have sought to avoid that in the systematic analysis of research material and triangulating multiple perspectives and methods, my insider

status is likely to affect the questions I asked and followed up on during data collection.

Perhaps most significantly here, however, is my status as a researcher. This can be associated with uneven power relations and while I have done all possible to negate or even overturn these dynamics in research events, this still has an impact on the project as a whole. As will be reflected on further in the thesis, I am interested and wary of what impact and influence I may have had on run-commuting simply by researching it. As a researcher at a distinguished UK university, I am conscious that my tellings and perspectives could have authority. As an emerging practice with little known about it, I may become the *de facto* expert about run-commuting due to my research, which in turn, may influence the practice further. Does researching an emerging practice validate it somehow? Does the fact it was deemed worthy of study by someone at a university alter the practice? Will my findings function to hold down and cement the practice rather than act as the mutable snapshot I intend? To draw on the Althussian notion of interpellation (1971, see also Law, 2000 and Craddock, 2020), have I hailed run-commuting into being by researching it? These are themes I reflect upon throughout this research process, and will return to in conclusion, but it is worth noting now that I may have already had some influence on run-commuting. I first researched it as part of my MA thesis and this received a fair amount of media attention and, as such, I am often called on as an expert in these accounts of run-commuting, not only helping them exist but providing them with some supposed kudos. This reporting of my research implicates me and the work in the discursive emergence and changing nature of run-commuting in someway. Recognising this risk is another reason for employing such a wide bricolage, multi-perspectival methodological approach to this project as detailed in this chapter. If my stories are to held with higher esteem or as somehow *the* stories, they are at least informed as widely, holistically and sensitively as possible.

Part Two:

Profile of run-commuting in the UK

Chapter 4

The thingness of run-commuting

This chapter is the first step in creating the profile of UK run-commuting. It sets out some of the broader changes and characteristics of the practice before more detailed profiling take place in the next two chapters. As such, this chapter does some important scene-setting for understanding the emergence, production and potential of run-commuting explored in this thesis. It begins by exploring the state of contemporary run-commuting, identifying some of its key changes and attributes, namely the institutionalisation and commercialisation of it. Following this, focus switches to practitioner perspectives on run-commuting, investigating the terminology used to talk about run-commuting practice as well as their introductions to the practice. Throughout this chapter and the following two, infographics are used to support discussions, collating various charts and diagrams into one graphic, usually at the end of sections.

Together, these elements help explore the question of the heart of this chapter: is run-commuting a thing? This was a common tension throughout the research, surfacing in discussions with run-commuters and non-run-commuters alike. Some are passionate about the wider developments around run-commuting (discussed later in the chapter), while others consider it as just something they do, with no wider framing or relevance. My conclusion on the thingness of run-commuting may be somewhat foreshadowed, considering it is the subject of this thesis. However, this is an important question to explore in providing the first academic account of the practice and especially interesting to compare to practitioners' perspectives on the matter. The idea of a thing speaks to one-half of the practice dichotomy set up by Shove et al (2012), the idea of practice-as-entity. They argue that if a recognisable conjunction of elements exists then a thing can be figured as an entity, something that can be spoken about and drawn upon by practitioners. This chapter tangles with this formulation by demonstrating the ability to recognise and talk about run-commuting in the first section before showing this to be misaligned with some run-commuters' perceptions of the practice later on in the chapter. The implications of this are attended to throughout the discussion. In essence, this chapter explores the thingness of run-commuting, acting as both a broad review of developments in the practice in the UK, and a critical discussion of whether it is a thing at all.

The emerging entity of run-commuting in the UK

Run-commuting in the UK is changing. I argue that these changes are working to converge multiple aspects of the practice into recognisable elements and thus helping to establish run-commuting as an entity. The introduction to this thesis already highlighted the increasing numbers of practitioners and proliferation of media attention cast on the practice. These doings perform, reproduce, communicate and disseminate ideas about run-commuting, establishing some of the elements of the practice. The new sense of enthusiasm around and changing nature of run-commuting are not only found in these sources however. More widely there has been increasing involvement in the practice from various organisations in a range of arenas. In turn, this is changing the nature of run-commuting. The practice is transforming from one made up of mostly isolated individuals, to one which much deeper connections between various actors, arguably shifting run-commuting from an activity performed by solitary parties into a more defined social practice (Shove et al, 2012). Notably within this, my ethnographic engagement with run-commuting has revealed an institutionalisation and commercialisation of the practice, which is chronologically summarised in Figure 4.1. As well as refining some of the key elements of run-commuting, these processes have increased conversations about run-commuting and provided resources for those doing it. Consequently, these changes have led to questions about what role this practice may have to play in contemporary society and this section aims to outline some of this new enthusiasm.

Practitioners and their activities (discussed in the introduction) are not the only actors contributing to the increasing prominence of run-commuting in the UK. A range of events, schemes and organisations have also launched over recent years to provide run-commuting with an institutional footprint too. This could be considered as a form of institutionalisation but one denoting an increase in the establishment and engagement of organisations with run-commuting rather than run-commuting cultures becoming institutionalised within pre-existing organisations. In essence, there are now institutions and organisations involved in promoting, advocating and advising around run-commuting that did not previously exist. For example, grassroots organisations have appeared in recent years in the UK as predominantly awareness-raising, tip-sharing and encouragement-giving websites, such as run2work and Running to Work. Both organisations began as personal (side) projects of passionate practitioners in 2014 and 2011 respectively,

and this is symptomatic of run-commuting organisations. Most commonly, such organisations have remained at this level, as solo hobby projects providing an advice service to the run-commuting community. However, a smaller number of organisations have grown and developed into larger, advocacy bodies. run2work is a good example of this. As well as providing guidance for run-commuters, it also launched a campaign aimed at getting the British Government to extend the cycle to work tax exemption scheme to run-commuting too (run2work, 2014). The campaign also launched a monthly run2work day in 2014, with the first one attracting an estimated 10,000 run-commuters in the UK (Bryant, 2014). This instigated something of a trend for other run-commuting initiatives and gave rise to a range of individual and collaborative causes. Mostly in the form of short-term challenges and campaigns, many commercial running organisations have collaborated with each other and with grassroots organisations to further promote run-commuting. In 2017, running shoe manufacturer ON teamed with GPS-tracking goliath Strava for #BeatTheRush, a one-week challenge aimed at getting people to run-commute at least once (Strava, 2017a). In the same year, energy drink manufacturer Red Bull launched its now annual Million Mile Commute campaign, encouraging people to run, walk or cycle to work until 1 million human-powered commuter miles were logged on Strava (Red Bull, 2018). These organisations and initiatives are evidence of the increasing institutional footprint of run-commuting in the UK. There are now organisations specifically set up to encourage, support and organise around run-commuting and an array of other pre-existing organisations who have found alignments with run-commuting, resulting in similar advocacy, albeit often on a small and temporally-limited scale.

The increasing prominence of brands within the run-commuting is also evidence of the growing commercialisation of the practice. Big brands are beginning to see the growing community of run-commuters as a potential customer-base. This itself is testament to its rising popularity - there is a now a specific run-commuting market to which advertising can be targeted. As well as their involvement in promoting run-commuting, brands are increasingly pitching products specifically to run-commuters. This is most evident with running backpacks, perhaps one of run-commuting's signifying materials. As well as 'ordinary' running backpacks now being pitched to a new market, there have been at least two companies established specifically making backpacks for run-commuters and available in the UK. IAMRUNBOX and Stolt Running have both recognised the specific backpack needs of run-commuters (see Chapter 10) and consider the market strong enough to successfully launch new

products via crowdfunding. The commercialisation of run-commuting is wider than just backpacks however. Many of the media articles about run-commuting include suggestions of the best kit for running to work, and specialist running shops offer advice for perfecting the run-commute essentials (see Runners Need's, n.d.). This speaks to the idea of mobile prosthetics (Bissell, 2009) and the specific prosthetic needs of run-commuters. These are materials that run-commuters take on the run, helping to facilitate their practice by extending bodies and capacities. However, they can also serve to encumber and inhibit, something brands are capitalising on, seeking to sell better experiences and increased capacities to practitioners through new, tailored and specific gear. While predominantly centred on bags, a whole host of materials are also now being aimed at run-commuters. Nike, the fitness clothing giant, even has a trainer range called RN CMTR, inspired by and tailored for the run-commuter lifestyle (Nike, 2016). Companies are beginning to see run-commuting as a potential revenue stream, resulting in an increasing commercialisation of the practice.

That idea may cast the involvement of commercial organisations within the promotion of run-commuting in a self-invested light. While there may be elements of a PR stunt in some of the initiatives, the participation of larger organisations with more financial clout has helped to initiate a wider-range of run-commuting schemes. For example, Home Run London, the world's first run-commuting cycle escort service founded in 2011, was supported by Fitness First, a large gym company. This scheme offered regular group run-commutes on various routes across London, during which a cycle escort would carry the runners' bags in a cycle trailer (the reasons why this would be desirable are explored in Chapter 10). Likewise, the aforementioned run2work campaign was supported by Buxton (a bottled-water manufacturer) and Virgin Active (a gym company) among others. Both schemes were among the first initiatives for run-commuting (see Figure 4.1) and neither now continue. While the involvement of a commercial partner can make provisions for run-commuting possible, the withdrawal of this support - because the budget, campaign or PR cycle has run its course - can bring an end to them. Although these were early schemes, perhaps their termination indicates that the idea of run-commuting was stronger than the actual market for it at that time.

A commercial partner is not always required however, and a few independent run-commuting schemes have managed to establish and thrive without commercialisation. Notably in the UK is the University of Manchester run-

commuting scheme – UMRun. Established in 2015, UMRun has grown a network of run-commuters through organising regular run-commuting groups and offering a free breakfast as part of their monthly RUNdezvous (University of Manchester, n.d.). So, whether commercial or independent, the provisioning for run-commuting has noticeably increased over the last few years.

This profile of contemporary run-commuting, I argue, demonstrates that the emergent nature of the practice is reaching something of a critical mass. The size, depth and the breadth of the practice may be enough to sustain it as more than just a mobile fad. Unlike run-commuting of previous decades, the current practice is more than isolated individuals choosing to run to work. As the numbers of run-commuters have increased, a community has developed to support this. People have begun to share their run-commuting in a myriad of ways, with tweets, blog posts, Instagram pictures and YouTube videos all perpetuating the idea and elements of run-commuting. This has been further aided by numerous media articles being written about run-commuting as well as the apparent commercialisation and institutionalisation of it.

This overview of recent developments in run-commuting also demonstrates its emergence as a practice-as-entity. It *is* being spoken about at an increasing rate and in a variety of arenas and resources *are* being developed which practitioners and would-be practitioners can draw upon. Along with the performance of run-commuting, these are functioning to establish recognisable elements of run-commuting and establish it as an entity. I contend that this makes run-commuting a thing. Under Cresswell's (2006) framework, there are specific brute facts, meaning and experiences of run-commuting that help to demarcate it as a thing in its own right, also reflected under Shove et al's (2012) framework where unique meanings, materials and competencies can be identified. These elements are refined and reproduced through the increasing performance, media dissemination, institutionalisation and commercialisation of run-commuting, which are further increasing run-commuting's thingness and reproducing it as a practice-as-entity.

Global connections

Although often posited as the global capital of run-commuting, the UK is not alone in experiencing a rise of run-commuting and its emergence as a thing. In fact, many

places have experienced a similar emergence in recent years. For example, further grassroots organisations/groups have been established globally. From The Run Commuter in the USA, Corrida Amiga in Brazil and Turnschuhpendler in Germany, run-commuters from around the world are now accessesing resources and communities locally to them. This is further supported by the global spread of media articles about the practice, with countries as diverse as Peru, Italy, Canada and Australia all having articles about run-commuting published in the national press.

The global development of run-commuting has been an interconnected affair, rather than one of bounded parallels. Although run-commuting practices around the world will demonstrate differences, the impact of online media and multi-national companies' engagement in run-commuting has led to run-commuting resources and representation crossing borders and the development of a global run-commuting influence. Global networks and partnerships are also developing around run-commuting. Corrida Amiga is a Brazilian-based organisation who aim to promote run-commuting by buddying up run-commuters. Since their launch in 2014, the organisation has strengthened, establishing an Australian branch in 2015 and becoming an important active commuting advocate in Brazil (Corrida Amiga, n.d.). They also partnered with The Run Commuter in 2014 to develop a manual for run-commuting. This was updated in 2016 in collaboration from IAMRUNBOX (a Swedish run-commuting company) as well as myself (a UK-based researcher) and published in five languages: English, Spanish, French, Swedish and Portuguese (Corrida Amiga, 2016). This serves to demonstrate the global influence and networks involved in run-commuting, as also seen in Figure 4.1. Therefore, although this is a study of UK run-commuting, it should not be taken out of this global context nor seen as a totally unique. Happenings in the UK run-commuting practices both effect and are affected by run-commuting practices elsewhere, and this influence comes to bear on the practice in different ways.

However, I am certainly not arguing that run-commuting is happening everywhere. It is by no means universal, and there will even be vast differences within countries where it does take place. Predominantly, run-commuting is something that happens in developed countries. For example, the non-UK run-commuters who responded to my survey comprised of run-commuters from the USA (29), Canada (13), Germany (6), Australia (4), New Zealand (3), Brazil (1), Finland (1), Guernsey (1), Ireland (1), and Italy (1). The element of choice in using running as transport

Figure 4.1 Global timeline of run-commuting

becomes important here. As discussed in the introduction, even though running as transport may be common in parts of the world where it is not a choice, I treat this as conceptually different to run-commuting and should be understood as a separate practice. As will also be shown in Chapter 5, run-commuting is generally the preserve of those who can make the choice to run to work, which entails certain privileges being present. Run-commuting is not a ubiquitous practice. While its imprint may be on a global scale, the spread of run-commuting is not even between, and within, countries. This project focuses on the UK in particular, in order to explore the factors behind its run-commuting geography (discussed in Chapter 5) and to understand the UK manifestation of run-commuting and the context it sits within. The UK, and London in particular, is often held as the world leader in run-commuting. This offers a valuable opportunity to investigate factors that contribute to its thingness as well as those which enable and restrict it, in turn helping to understand more about a practice very little is known about.

Run-commuters and the thingness of run-commuting

My analysis of the thingness of run-commuting marks it as an entity, something that is recognisable, spoken about, which has resources that can be drawn on, and thus something that can be understood as a discernible thing. This section explores how that aligns with practitioners' perspectives on the topic, and while none were asked about this directly (especially with a practice theories framing), it was talked about in various ways in the research. This section focuses particularly on the terminology used to talk about run-commuting and run-commuters' awakenings to the practice.

Terminology and talk

If a fundamental aspect in a practice being an entity is the ability for it to be spoken about (and, by extension, understood), than words and talk become a decisive aspect in the thingness of a practice (see also Hitchings and Latham, 2016). As discussed in the introduction, there are many labels and terms used to describe run-commuting and my use of run-commuting in this project is not indicative that it is *the* term for the practice. Indeed, only 46.15% of survey respondents actually

use this label, with a further 24.48% being aware of it but not using it. Some interview participants reflected this trend, adding a little more depth to their use of the term[1]:

> **Malcolm:** I guess I've really only seen or been familiar with "run-commuting" as a term. It seems to capture it well.
>
> **Sam:** 'cause Strava has kind of a little tag where you can put it down as "run-commute", so I guess I did think of it as run-commuting, yeah … It's a hashtag on Instagram and occasionally if I've gone past something like Tower Bridge or the Shard or a really nice picture, I take a photo of it and hashtag it as a run-commute thing.
>
> **Dominic:** I've been run-commuting for several years, but I would probably say I've only been using the term in the last 2, 3 years … I mean, there are probably many people out there who do it and don't call it run-commuting because they don't know to call it "run-commuting" … It's just that people don't actually know it's a thing to grab on to.

The sense that run-commuting is a well-suited terms comes through in these quotes, along with the impression it is a newer development within run-commuting. A mix of social media, self-tracking and practitioner talk are helping to disseminate run-commuting as a term and elevate it to the most common parlance for the practice, if not common parlance more widely. Dominic's suggestion that run-commuting is a thing that can be grabbed onto is a useful and accurate one, as the wider cultural, community and organisational developments do generally adopt this term. It is a label around which there is discourse and things are mostly galvanising, providing the sense that run-commuting may be the practice whereas running to work or running home may be actions, conceived as lacking this wider socio-cultural framing and context.

However, run-commuting is a term used by less than half of practitioners I conceptualise as doing run-commuting. Furthermore, almost 30% of respondents to The Big Run Commuting Survey had never heard of run-commuting as an expression before. Indeed, 'this survey' was a fairly frequent response to the question of where/how participants first encountered the phrase run-commuting, a sentiment also echoed by some research participants:

[1] An overview of interview participants and their run-commuting attributes and contexts is provided for consultation in Chapter 3.

Simon[2]: Do you know it as "run-commuting"?

Fiona: No, I don't think I had, really. Funnily enough, when you gave me that thing [business card] and I did the survey… I mean, if somebody had said that to me I'd know what they'd meant by it, but … I would probably just describe it as "running to work" rather than "run-commuting".

Simon: So is that where you first heard the term then?

Fiona: Probably, yeah. Well, as I say, it made obvious sense about what it meant, obviously, but it certainly wasn't common parlance.

This beckons two things. Firstly, a reflection on what impact researching and labelling run-commuting, or any emerging practice, has on the practice. Although I believe my use of run-commuting to be appropriate as the modal term for both practitioners and in wider developments, is it accurate if less than half of those I claim to do run-commuting do not describe it this way? In unpacking Althusser's notion of interpellation, John Law (2000) highlights the mutual recognition and obviousness needed for something to be hailed into being. Subjects must instantly recognise themselves when addressed by the interpellator. Such a process is visible in my discussion with Fiona, where she instantly knew she was run-commuting when presented with it, even though it is not a term she used before. As such, is my analysis of run-commuting as a thing self-fulfilling as I lay out the recognisable elements, discourses, definitions and resources of run-commuting? These are important questions to consider and will be picked up further in the chapter and in Chapter 11.

The second question this raises is where the (relative) popularity of the term run-commuting derives from. The most common first encounter with this term for survey respondents was social media. Social media, media articles, and online material are important sources disseminating run-commuting as a term according to participants, as demonstrated in previous quotes, which places significance on media spaces in the emergence and transformation of run-commuting. Unfortunately, there is not room in this thesis to explore this space as a site of run-commuting and these arguments require unpacking in another forum.

Of those participants who did not use the term run-commute, a variety of other monikers were used instead. Three alternatives appeared most frequently – running

[2] In interview extracts, Simon refers to me, as discussed in Chapter 3.

to work, running home, and run to work - however, a wealth of other terms was also utilised by participants, including work-train, work waddle, daily dash, commutathon, runmute and home run. This variety suggests that despite my advocacy for run-commuting as the appropriate term, there is no unifying terminology around which all run-commuters band together. This suggests that a common lexicon, culture or community among run-commuters may not yet be present and it is not a thing all practitioners do speak about, therefore questioning its nature as an entity.

Furthering this line of thought, most participants who do not use the term run-commute, stated that they do not use any term for the practice. This is a fascinating circumstance, which raises further questions about the establishment of run-commuting as a practice. Here we see some practitioners who consider run-commuting as just something they do, with no wider framing, relevance or need to label it. This position considers run-commuting more akin to an action, behaviour or habit that warrants little thought than a practice people could belong to and associate with. When asked if they use any other term for run-commuting, one survey respondent (#66, Female 35-39) wrote: "Not specifically. If people ask how I get to work, I say that I run to work. Not much other need to talk about it". For this run-commuter, a lack of need to talk about run-commuting meant that they had not developed a word they use for it, and implies that for them, run-commuting may not really be a thing.

For others who did not use any term for run-commuting, there was a struggle to consider run-commuting as a thing in and of itself. Very often, participants to the survey did not demarcate run-commuting from other forms of running:

> **Survey respondent #344, Male 35-39:** I don't think I really have a term for it. It's just running.
>
> **Survey respondent #191, Female 40-44:** Well, just sometimes "running"! I don't always think of it as a separate, distinct category from other forms of running.

For these people, run-commuting is just running. They do not distinguish between the two and do not consider run-commuting as a separate practice. Even though I would be inclined to disagree, arguing that running and run-commuting are analytically different due to their differing elements of practie, it is significant that some practitioners themselves do not hold this point of view. In such a situation, is

my prescription that these practitioners belong to a thing they do not believe to be a thing correct? Writing about different contexts, Melucci (1996: p.21) sees social movements as "objects of knowledge constructed by the analyst only" rather than externally existing entities. Is my analysis of run-commuting doing the same? Am I creating something that only exists in analysis? Here, run-commuting's deeply-rooted entanglement with running is both incredibly important to the rise of the practice, but equally is a constraint for some in it being or becoming a thing in its own right and thus questions the practice-as-entity configuration I alledge.

Interestingly, no respondents disputed run-commuting's thingness based upon an inability to untangle it from other commuting. Despite being positioned equally in namesake, the commuting element of run-commuting featured conspicuously little in respondents' discussions of the terminology they use. For some, this will be a passive circumstance, simply not considering the commuting as integral to their run-commuting. While for others this is an active decision. Some run-commuters actively dislike run-commuting as a term due to its association with commuting. Run-commuting is a way to improve their work-life balance and to actively take-back the commuting time for something else (discussed further in Chapter 6). Therefore, associating it with commuting was not desirable. For others, run-commuting is too distant from what they conceive commuting to be as Callum deliberated:

> **Simon**: Do you call it "run-commuting"?
>
> **Callum:** No. I'd say, "I'm running home today." That's what I would say.
>
> **Simon:** And is there any reasoning behind?
>
> **Callum:** … A commute's something you do unpleasantly in traffic or something … because I'm just on foot. It feels different because it's on foot, in the same way that it feels stress-free that it's on foot. I think it's the association of commuting and stress and unpleasantness … I think if you were cycling, I think that's probably a commute as well because you're in traffic. But because walking and running is really mentally kind of easy, I don't really think it's a commute.
>
> **Simon:** By your process then, you don't commute at all? Because everything you do is on foot.

> **Callum:** Hm, do I commute to work? If somebody asked me do I commute to work, I'd say, "I walk or run to work." So I'm fudging it a bit and I think it's an ambiguity in my mind … I quite like the term [run-commuting] because it sort of gives it equal status to other modes of transport and you think of a run-commute suddenly becomes an option to commute, to be running. So I kind of quite like it, but I just don't use it myself I think because it feels too easy for a commute.

A disconnect between running to work and commuting is visible here. As demonstrated in Callum's thoughts and self-confessed ambiguities, he sees the brute facts of his practice to be in line with a commute but he cannot square the meanings and experiences he understands both running and commuting to have. They are not the same and thus he does not see his run between work and home as a commute. This speaks to the wider negative perceptions held culturally about commuting and what it feels like (see Bissell, 2018), as well as the challenges posed to this by other (often more active) forms of transport, such as cycle commuting (see Aldred, 2015).

What is clear is that run-commuting has a tricky relationship with commuting. For some run-commuters, they are two practices that are conceptually and experientially difficult to marry and therefore the conceptualisation of run-commuting as a practice situated between the two, rather than a tweaked practice of running or just an activity is not something they recognise (or want to in some cases). Social meanings matter in transport and mobility practices (Fitt, 2017). They have a large influence on everyday practices, choices and performances. The differences in run-commuting terminologies (or lack of them) and the underlying representations they may hold are important in understanding the practice, and indeed whether it is actually a practice. Interestingly, despite less than half of run-commuters using that terminology, almost three quarters of respondents to the survey did consider run-commuting as a form of transport (Figure 4.2). This is seen in Callum's deliberations and is clearly an ambiguity for more run-commuters. The overt connection of running and commuting in run-commuting is one reason that encouraged me to adopt this phrase for the project. It not only (potentially) signifies the practice rather than the action but alters the discourses around run-commuting, moving it more squarely within the transport realm (as also highlighted by Callum earlier), and in doing so, asking new questions of the practice and inviting new considerations of it.

If there is no consensus about what to call run-commuting and a deliberations about whether it is a thing or even worthy of talking about, how do new run-commuters find out about run-commuting? The pertinence of asking this question is heightened when considering the reactions of non-run-commuters to the topic of run-commuting. Surprise and intrigue is common, with many seemingly never having considered it something people would do. This was a common reaction among practitioners' friends and families too (as seen in Figure 4.2), many of whom considered the practice as somewhere between crazy and impressive. Therefore, the question of how do people become aware of the practice is worth asking, particularly considering the growing popularity of it. As seen in Figure 4.2, almost two-thirds of UK run-commuters claim their awareness of run-commuting was instinctive, selecting the 'it just seemed obvious' option in the survey. This was also explained further by interview participants:

> **Fiona:** Don't think it was a really conscious thing. I just kind of thought, well, it was a good way of getting to work. I think I'd always assumed that cycling to work was a kind of understood way, so running just seemed to be an extension of that, really.
>
> **Sam:** I think it was a natural progression from cycling, really. I think if I'd just been getting the Tube, I'd never have thought of it, but because I was cycling, it's very closely associated with that in terms of the way it works and I knew the route and everything like that. It was just another step, really.

While Fiona and Sam profess a similar obviousness to run-commuting, they also highlight the role other active commuting modes potentially have in producing this obviousness. Whether walking or cycling, the presence and visibility of getting to work by other active forms of transport may lay the ground for running to be considered an obvious possibility for some run-commuters.

This obviousness is still slightly surprising given the supposed rise of run-commuting. This would suggest a greater emphasis on becoming aware of run-commuting from *somewhere* or *someone* else rather than an intrinsic awareness. Some run-commuters did report external stimuli here with other people seeming to have a higher impact here than written material. Just over 10% of respondents reported

Figure 4.2 Run-commuters' perspectives on the thingness of run-commuting

that seeing others do it was their run-commuting awakening, while 6.29% and 5.24% reported this came via a friend/family member or colleague respectively. Only 3.85% of respondents reported that reading about run-commuting was their first awareness of it (in contrast to the influence this has in popularising the term run-commuting). Similar awakenings were also reported by run-commuters interviewed in the project:

> **Sienna:** I would walk to work actually … about 3 and a half miles … One night getting the bus home, I saw someone running and I was like, "I'm gonna try and run home."

> **Dominic:** I mean, what put the idea in my head was I was reading an issue of Runner's World magazine and there was a feature about run-commuting and I'm not even sure they called it "run-commuting" then either … This was sometime in 2011. It was a couple of pages long and I think it was more primarily about the gear to help you run-commute as opposed to how to run-commute … So that's what I remember of that article, but interestingly as well, around the same, somebody in one of the online running communities I belonged to, they regularly spoke of their experience run-commuting. And I'm not even sure he called it "run-commuting" either. It kind of justified it in my mind.

These demonstrate that the various ways in which run-commuting gets talked about, shared and made visible (including through commercialisation), affecting awareness and participation in run-commuting. However, these are not as effective as the apparent innate obviousness of run-commuting that woke most survey respondents to the possibility of run-commuting. Such an internal awareness further questions the thingness of run-commuting. Run-commuting is possible to speak about but the low influence of disseminated awareness questions whether people do or if anyone is listening. Trying to couple these findings with the rising popularity of and attention to run-commuting raises interesting queries about what wider socio-cultural changes have occurred to make run-commuting seem more obvious than it was previously, whether awareness is genuinely innate or the source just unrecognised, or what changes have occurred to convert more of this innate awareness into participation. While increasing participation in running and race entries would certainly contribute to the rise of run-commuting (Cave and Miller, 2016), they are not large enough to wholly account for the rising rates of run-

commuting. These questions will be further explored to at several points throughout the thesis.

In terms of conceptualising the thingness of run-commuting, participants in this study paint somewhat of a muddy and contested picture. There is no definite consensus among practitioners as to whether run-commuting is a thing, if it is a thing, whether it is a distinct thing from running (which is a much more recognisable thing/practice-as-entity – see Nettleton and Green, 2014; Larsen, 2018b), what relationship it has with commuting, or even what the practice should be called. For an emerging and transforming practice with many new practitioners, this is not too surprising. However, these tensions will underscore many of the findings throughout this thesis. Nonetheless, a (current) dominant discourse is becoming tangible within participants' responses. Although not used by the majority of run-commuters, run-commuting is the single most used term by run-commuters and most also perceive run-commuting to be a form of transport and therefore conceptually different to ordinary running. These were two analytical distinctions I held when approaching this project and attempting to conceptualise run-commuting. As such, I still contend run-commuting's thingness is a practice-as-entity. It is practice with recognisable elements that are shared and reproduced in a variety of ways. It is a practice that can be spoken about, even if some practitioners do not do so or are unsure how to talk about it. Some run-commuters dismissing its thingness, does not prohibit them from being run-commuting practitioners and reproducing run-commuting through their practice-as-performance where they are still integrating the elements of practice. Indeed, the multiple meanings and perspectives on run-commuting actually feed into the qualities of run-commuting as a practice, rather than detracting from its thingness. Currently, run-commuting may be more than one entity (the differences mostly centring around meanings and distinctions from other related practices) but as reflected in the evidence of this chapter so far, the multiple versions of run-commuting are converging towards a dominant entity. The majority of this thesis unpacks and delineates this dominant entity while also highlighting where different understandings of run-commuting's thingness become significant to understanding it.

Conclusion

This chapter has served two purposes. Firstly, it has provided the broader strokes of the profile being painted of UK run-commuting in Part One, outlining the recent developments in the practice and practitioner perspectives on the practice. Within this, I highlighted the increasing institutionalisation and commercialisation of run-commuting occurring alongside the increasing participation and media interest noted in Chapter 1. This has led to a greater organisation, advocacy and resource-base for run-commuting as well perpetuating and disseminating ideas of the practice. Following this, the terminology used by practitioners was explored, identifying run-commuting as the single most popular term but still used by less than half of practitioners, with many not even having heard of it. While various alternative terms were used, some run-commuters did not label the practice, having an apparent lack of need to talk about the practice. Others, however, sought alternatives due to an uneasiness with the commuting element of run-commuting. For many of these practitioners, run-commuting was not conceived of as distinct from their ordinary running, and for others there were active efforts to diminish the commuting element of their practice, perceiving it as experientially and semantically different to their practice and not something they desired. The lack of agreed upon ways of talking about run-commuting prompted the question of how run-commuters came to know about run-commuting in such circumstances and here most professed an innate awareness of the practice, something that belies the increasing dissemination, discourse and participation of run-commuting.

This same evidence was also employed in fulfilling the second purpose of this chapter – establishing the thingness of run-commuting. The overview of recent developments in run-commuting identified it as having recognisable elements than can be spoken about and provides resources that can be drawn on. Under Shove et al's (2012) conceptualisation of practice-as-entity, I argued that this made run-commuting a thing and a discernible thing distinguishable but entangled with the wider practices of running and commuting. My formulation was questioned however by some practitioner perspectives who not only elided a need to talk about run-commuting but challenged its demarcation from wider running practices and its merging with commuting practices. These are tensions that will underscore many of the findings discussed in this thesis but ultimately, I still contend that run-commuting is a thing and a practice-as-entity. Some practitioners' unease with the

thingness of run-commuting does not exclude their classification as practitioners of run-commuting who share, produce and reproduce run-commuting through their performances and talk. Rather, these various conceptualisation of run-commuting feed into its quality as an emerging thing with various entities that are converging towards one dominant entity. This entity will be the principal focus of this thesis and having established its thingness, the next chapter will take a more fine-grained approach to profiling run-commuting by exploring some of the brute facts of the practice in the UK.

Chapter 5

Brute facts of run-commuting in the UK

Having set up the thingness of run-commuting in the last chapter, this chapter explores more granular scene-setting aspects of the profile of run-commuting being built in this Part. In it, I focus upon what Cresswell (2006) would term the brute facts of movement, tackling some fundamental questions regarding where, who, what and how of run-commuting in the UK - offering insights into some of the basics and the material movements of the practice. As such, this chapter outlines what run-commuting looks like in the UK, forming a context that will be built on throughout the thesis, which will be heavily signposted. To do this, this chapter predominantly presents a critical discussion of results from The Big Run Commuting Survey, in combination with secondary data and interview material. The bricolage approach of this project is clearly evident in this chapter as the brute facts of run-commuting are being stitched and cobbled together from a range of sources to offer perspectives on the geographic, demographic, employment, commuting and run-commuting characteristics of the run-commuting in the UK.

I am not just interested in presenting this data here however. The information contained within this chapter offers important insights into the production, staging and social implications of run-commuting. Attention will be paid to wider geographical, social and cultural factors that enable and constrain run-commuting. As such, consideration will be paid to the different structures and practices at play in run-commuting, be they spatial, topographic, work, home, transport and other aspects of everyday life. These also relate to the bundling and complexing of practices outlined by Shove et al's (2012), offering a useful way of thinking about wider practices and their influences, collaborations and competitions with run-commuting.

My focus on enablement and constraint is not just a functional affair however. David Bissell (2018) argues that enablement and constraint form crucial elements bound up in politics of mobility (Cresswell, 2010). Enabling factors, in particular, could also be thought about as privileges that permit and encourage run-commuting, and these become pervasive when exploring the brute facts of run-commuting. However, understanding these in run-commuting gets a little muddy when acknowledging that

it is often a constraint elsewhere that then becomes an enabling factor to run-commuting. As discussed more in the next chapter, run-commuting is often catalysed by a lack of time to run elsewhere in life. Therefore, enabling factors of run-commuting could be thought of as both things which positively encourage and facilitate the practice and factors that enable by creating the time squeezes that are a foundation of run-commuting for so many, what we might usually think of as negative things. This focus of enablement and constraint thus not only illuminates the bundling of practices within run-commuting but also some of the politics and differentiation bound up in and produced by run-commuting. Such considerations will be at the forefront of this exploration of brute facts, which begins with a discussion of the geography of run-commuting.

Geographies of run-commuting

As discussed in the previous chapter, run-commuting is not only a phenomenon in the UK, but a practice that has a global spread. In honesty, an accurate geography of the practice is not known and the sources do not exist for us to know this currently. There are, however, sources that hint towards this that can be stitched together (in line with a bricolage approach), to offer an indicative geography. There are sources that offer relatively extensive indications of run-commuting's global spatiality and the position of the UK within this. It should be noted from the outset that there are issues and limitations associated with each source, as will be discussed, so these understandings should only be taken as indicative.

Big data offers the broadest insights into the geographies of run-commuting and are often collected passively or as by-products of other activities (boyd and Crawford, 2012; Kitchin, 2013; 2014a; 2014b). For example, Google searches for "run commute" and "run to work" permit an insight into where interest in run-commuting is coming from. This reveals run-commuting is stirring interest in 27 different countries, with traffic coming predominantly from the UK, USA, New Zealand, Australia, South Africa, Ireland and Canada (Figure 5.1; Google Trends 2018a; 2018b). While these may be more developed countries, the analytics on the search term "run to work" show that is not exclusively their preserve with countries such as India, Nigeria and Thailand also searching for the term. However, this data needs to be accepted cautiously. Internet access and Google use differs

considerably across the world (Graham et al, 2012), and the ability of algorithms to understand and process (and change) homographs, semantics and word-meanings may produce inaccurate and incomplete results (Thornton, 2017, 2018). A phrase like run to work is particularly susceptible to this, perhaps demonstrated by Google offering the related queries of "how to run a business" when inspecting the analytics. The largest skew in this data, however, is the use of an English language phrase. It is unsurprising that most traffic for these terms originates from English-speaking countries. Although, non-English speaking countries are registered including, Sweden, The Netherlands, Turkey, Russia and Japan, undoubtedly different countries would appear more prominently if analysing search terms in other languages. For example, Bulgaria does not feature here but run-commuting does occur as shown by Barnfield (2020). So while the UK's supposed prominence within the run-commuting world has some credence based upon Google search terms, there are many biases here that work to increase its prominence. The UK would be unlikely to appear so pronounced if analysing Internet search traffic for "Turnschuhpendler", "運行通勤" or "correr viaje".

By far the biggest and potentially most interesting existing source of data relating to the geographies run-commuting comes from Strava. Strava is the largest activity tracking app/platform in the world and operates as a social network for runners, cyclists and other sports people. Every year since 2015, Strava has released an annual report, summarising the data that has been collected on the service, including information about run-commuting. These reports are analyses of big data, being formulated by analysing the activities of millions of runners worldwide. The 2017 and 2018 annual reports offer insights, albeit different insights, into the global geographies of run-commuting. The most recent (2018) reports on the popularity of run-commuting based upon the average number of weekly trips made by run-commuters in different countries, rather than absolute participation. Japan tops this list, with the UK and Ireland, USA, Germany, Brazil, Spain and France making up the rest of the top seven (Figure 5.1). In 2017b, Strava reported on the cities with the highest number of run-commuters. Here, London topped the rankings, followed by Amsterdam, Paris, New York, Sydney, San Francisco, Los Angeles, São Paolo, Barcelona and Melbourne. Although still suggesting a pre-eminence of more developed countries, Strava's analyses demonstrate a wider spread of countries, particularly away from English-speaking nations.

The data offered by Strava is extremely valuable to understanding run-commuting practices and will be drawn on multiple times in this profile. However, caution is needed with this dataset for a few key reasons that are summarised here and explained more fully in Appendix 2. Firstly, data from Strava is only representative of Strava users rather than the wider population of run-commuters. Secondly, it is not known how users use Strava, meaning the data may only represent certain kinds of run-commutes rather than all. Thirdly, wariness is needed in accepting any year-on-year changes reported by Strava, as these may also represent their changing user base. Lastly, there is a lack of clarity regarding how Strava identifies and classifies run-commutes on their platform. Despite being a potentially invaluable source, for these four reasons, the data from Strava needs to be accepted cautiously and its accuracy questioned, although there is often not enough information about the data to do so rigorously. Due to the limitations highlighted, the insights presented from Strava data should be considered suggestive rather than exact.

These big data sources with their range of accuracies and biases combine to offer the best picture that can be made about global geography of run-commuting. Together they suggest that run-commuting is most popular in developed and English-speaking countries, with the UK and USA highlighted as the most common countries for run-commuting. The spread of countries included within the sources also indicates the limitations of current sources to pick up and attend to run-commuting around the world in equal measure. Language and technical-biases exist, which work to increase the prevalence of some countries while decreasing that of others. Simply, we currently lack the sources to understand run-commuting in more depth, breadth or with more accuracy on a global scale. This puts emphasis on improving the range and quality of information we have about the practice and the survey conducted for this project was an attempt to do so for the UK.

The sources presented so far indicate that the UK is a hotspot for run-commuting. While this may be the case, run-commuting is not happening everywhere in the UK in equal measure. As has already been suggested, London and its surrounding hinterland could be considered as the global capital of run-commuting, and this was mirrored in the geography of survey respondents' home locations (Figure 5.1). In fact, and perhaps unsurprisingly, large urban areas featured most heavily in the survey. As well as London, notable hotspots on the heat map include Birmingham, Manchester, Leeds, Nottingham, Edinburgh, Belfast, Bristol and Cambridge. With these cities being some of the most populous in the UK, their presence on a heat

map of absolute numbers of run-commuters could be anticipated. However, this geography does not just mirror that of the wider population. Some large urban areas are conspicuous in their relative absence (such as Glasgow, Liverpool and Sheffield), while other places are represented more greatly than their population share would suggest. For example, both London and Cambridge feature more strongly on the run-commuting map. According to the last census, Cambridge is only the 47th largest city in terms of population in the UK but is within the top five most populous run-commuting cities according to my survey. Likewise, although London is by far the most populous city in the UK, it only has around 13% of the total UK population, whereas over half of run-commuters responding to this survey live and/or work in London. This suggests that more is influencing the rates of run-commuting than purely population distribution. The structures of cities and their spatial, topographic, economic, residential and social layouts may have an impact here but sadly, a granular GIS-based analysis of these is beyond the scope of the thesis and may be somewhat futile given the relatively small sample this is based on. However some of these factors will be discussed more throughout the thesis and some of these structures will be examined within London further below, where a large enough sample size permits finer-grained analysis.

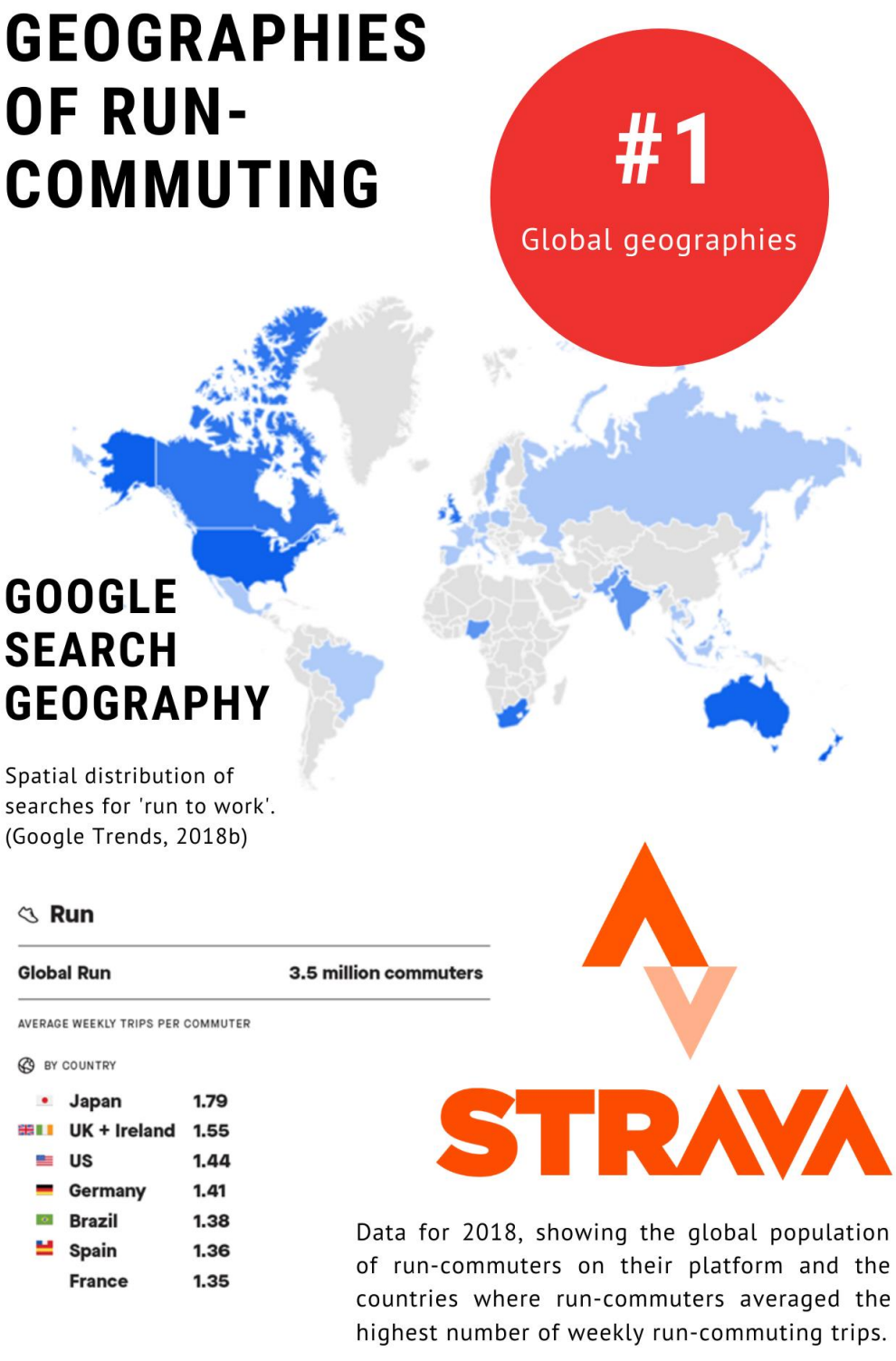
The heat map also demonstrates the unevenness of run-commuting within countries, which nationwide reporting in other sources hides. Along with places of high run-commuting rates, the heat maps make visible areas of low run-commuting rates or an absence of it completely. While rural areas as a whole feature scarcely in the geography of survey-respondents, some places appear to be devoid of run-commuting. Much of Wales, Scotland, Northern Ireland, and patches of England, such as East Anglia, Cornwall, and northern England report very little run-commuting beyond some urban hubs. This suggests that urban areas are more conducive to run-commuting than rural areas, with infrastructural, topographical, spatial density and safety factors readily coming to mind as to why this may be.

However, zooming in on cities abundant with run-commuting reveals that more must be at play than simply the affordances of the physical environment. London was the only city with enough respondents to produce a heat map of, and analysing this reveals a further uneven geography within the city (Figure 5.1). Despite similar infrastructural, geographical, and topographical aspects to much of London, hotspots of run-commuters' residences are still visible. Areas in inner London appear to have a greater density of run-commuters than those further from the

centre. This may be a product of both a higher population density and a shorter commute, perhaps making it more runnable. A band from south-west to south, central and east London is particularly noticeable in terms of run-commuters' home locations. This incorporates places such as Putney, Wandsworth, Clapham, Battersea, Vauxhall, Westminster, City of London and Stratford. These are generally more affluent areas of London, with a population of younger professionals (Cheshire and Uberti, 2014). There are low run-commuting areas visible too, particularly to the west of Greater London including areas such as Brentford, Brent, Ealing, Wembley and Uxbridge. These are generally less affluent areas of the city with a more ethnically diverse population (Dorling, 2013; Cheshire and Uberti, 2014). The geography of run-commuters' home locations suggest that distance to work, income level, age and ethnicity may all have bearing on the proclivity to run-commute.

The locations of work places also provides some indications as to the conditions that give rise to run-commuting. Looking at the national picture (Figure 5.1), the hotspots emanating out of cities on the home locations have become more tightly concentrated on their centres. This suggests that most run-commuters are commuting into city centres, which is not too surprising, city centres are prime workplace locations and have the infrastructure and transport provision to support mass commuting. However, particular industries are more likely to be found here than others, hinting towards factors at play in encouraging run-commuting. Those jobs which require less space, can afford higher ground rents and may desire the kudos and/or accessibility that comes with a city-centre locations (Porter and Barber, 2006) are more likely than those which have more expansive space needs to be found in city centres. For example, quaternary, tertiary and white-collar jobs are more likely to be found in city centres than blue-collar primary and secondary jobs in the post-modern city (Tallon, 2013). Zooming in again to look at the case of London (Figure 5.1), the diverse hotspots of run-commuters' home locations transforms into more highly concentrated areas in central London, the City of London and the Canary Wharf area for the work locations, areas with high proportion of finance, media and legal industries. Jobs in these industries can also command high wages, suggesting that affluence, industry type and/or workplace culture may have an impact on run-commuting. The deindustrialisation of UK cities is important here. While the emptying out of primary and secondary industries from city centres has resulted in the rise of highly-paid professional jobs in some places, such as those identified in London hotspots, for other places these industries have

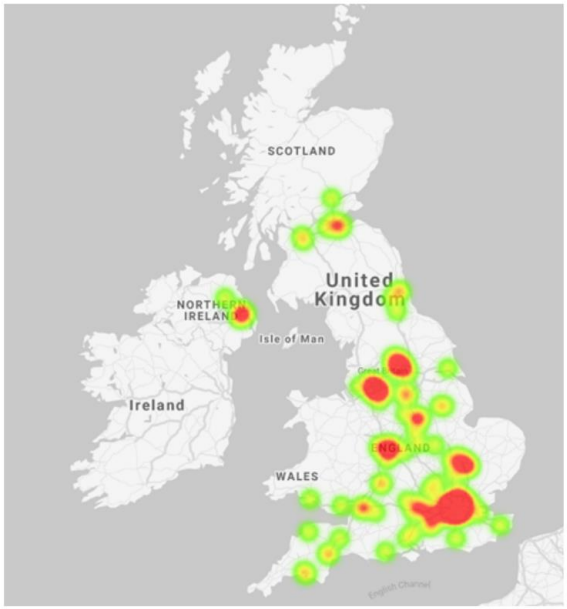
Figure 5.1 Geographies of run-commuting



GEOGRAPHIES OF RUN-COMMUTING

#2

UK home locations

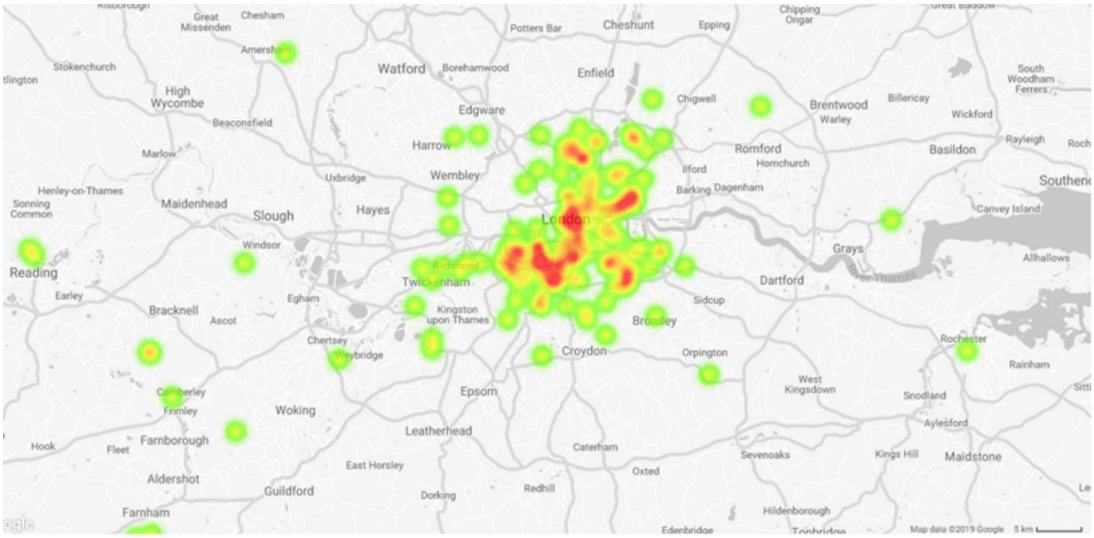


LEFT:

Run-commuters' home locations in the UK

BELOW:

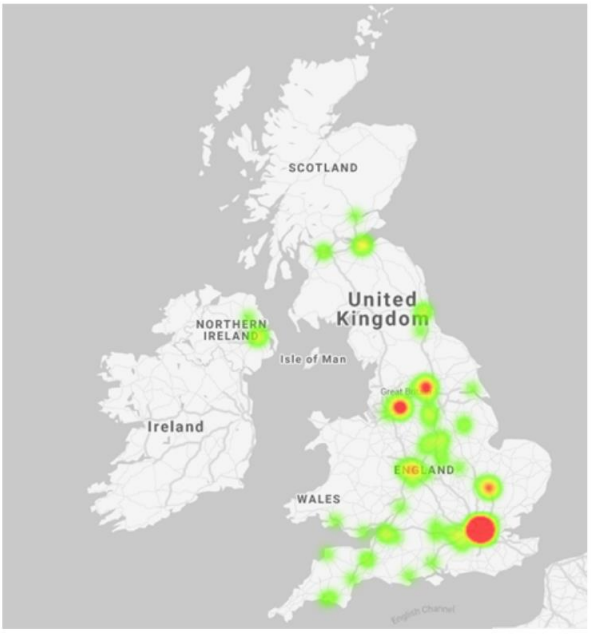
Run-commuters' home locations in London



GEOGRAPHIES OF RUN-COMMUTING

#3

UK work locations

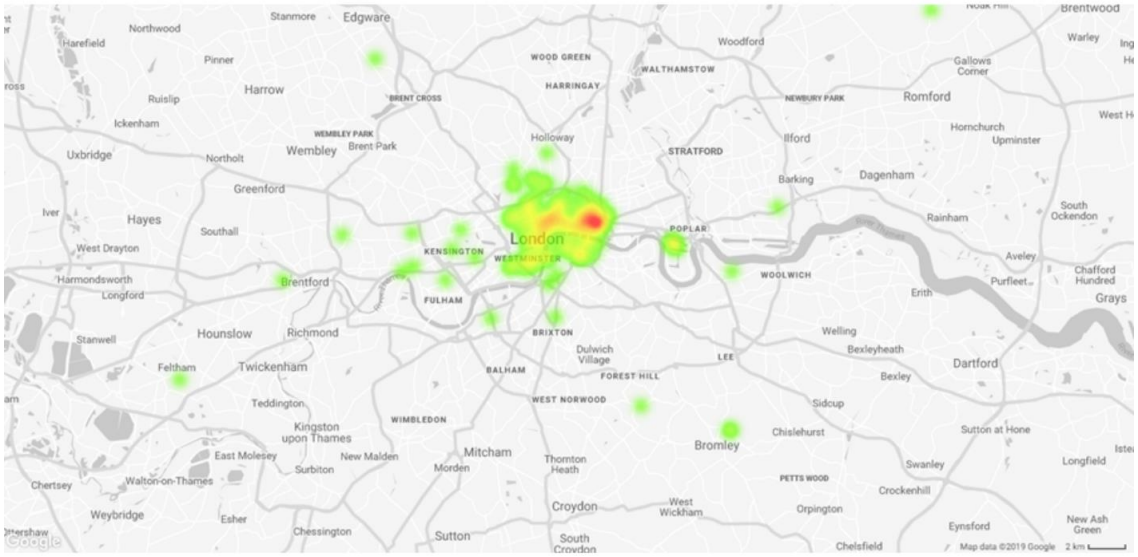


LEFT:

Run-commuters' work locations in the UK

BELOW:

Run-commuters' work locations in London



been replaced with lower paid service, retail and tourism jobs, as well as a return to city centre living (Lever, 1991; Dorling, 2005). As explored throughout this chapter, these may constrain run-commuting prevalence in such places, as employees may have less interest in running, fewer facilities to aid run-commuting, or may not have a commute longer enough to make run-commuting worthwhile, for example. These are some of the structures of cities that may contribute to the geography of run-commuting presented in this section.

As with the other sources used so far to help piece together a geography of run-commuting, my survey has its limitations which are likely to have influenced the geography presented. Recruiting mostly through social media platforms will reach those run-commuter more active on social media, which may not be consistent across the country. My base in London is also likely to have biased the geography presented here, as is the fact that the only in-person recruitment also occurred in London. There were also issues relating to the reporting of postcodes used to determine locations here. Some respondents chose not to provide postcodes or misreported them, in which case they were not included, and others only gave the first half of their postcode, which were included and mapped as the centre of that postcode area. Thus, the geography offered in Figure 5.1 and discussed here is only indicative but suggests that run-commuting in the UK is mostly an urban affair with big cities, and London in particular, presenting the greatest densities of run-commuters. Not all cities appeared to be abundant in run-commuters however, suggesting more than just population distribution is producing run-commuting's geography. Further to this, zooming into London's distribution of run-commuters' home and work locations, suggests that structures such as infrastructure, job type, affluence, distance to work, workplace culture, and the processes and practices that underpin these, may also be factors influencing the rate of run-commuting. These ideas will be further explored throughout the thesis.

Numbers of run-commuters

Another key question is how many people do run-commuting. Currently, this is simply not possible to know with any accuracy for the UK. The large, nationwide surveys, which would provide accurate data as to people's commuting habits, do not offer run-commuting as an option. Even if they did, they often enquire about

primary commuting mode, which may mask run-commuting's presence. As discussed further below, run-commuting is often used within a suite of transport modes by practitioners but infrequently as the primary mode across a week or even within a journey, with many run-commuters performing multi-modal commuting journeys. As such, run-commuters' commuting practices are actually plural, existing within bundles or complexes of different commuting practices. The oversight of run-commuting in commuting surveys therefore represents a large gap in our knowledge and indicates an area where stakeholders within active travel and transport organisations could make an impact on better understanding this practice.

Once again, other data sources can be pieced together suggestively to help fill this gap. Arriving at such estimation entails performing calculations based on data from various sources. In the interest of concision and clarity, summaries of how these estimations were reached are provided here with more detail and explanation regarding the calculations behind them given in Appendix 3. Strava is the only data source concerning run-commuting with enough scope and range to offer an indicative figure as to the population of run-commuters in the UK. Their latest annual report (Strava, 2018) indicates that globally there are 3.5 million run-commuters, who in total ran 21,781,323 run-commutes (Figure 5.2). This represents an increase of 70% since 2017, which indicates that run-commuting is growing more quickly outside of the UK and Ireland, where a smaller increase of 56.4% on 2017 rates was reported. This itself was 51% increase on 2016 rates, suggesting that UK and Ireland run-commutes logged on Strava have more than doubled between 2016 and 2018 (Figure 5.2). Calculated from data regarding total run-commutes and the average number of run-commutes per week per run-commuter, Strava data suggests there are around 57,000 run-commuters in the UK and Ireland on their platform (Figure 5.2).

These figures should only been seen as representing Strava users, their run-commuting habits and the changing population of Strava users however. As noted earlier, there are issues with the accuracy of this data source, and in this instance, being unable to record non-Strava users is likely to result in a large underestimation of the run-commuting population. Estimating this underestimation may be possible however, providing a rough indication of the total number of run-commuters in the UK. This estimation is based on identifying how many UK runners there are on Strava, establishing what percentage of runners on Strava are run-commuters and then extrapolating that percentage to the wider UK running population using Sport

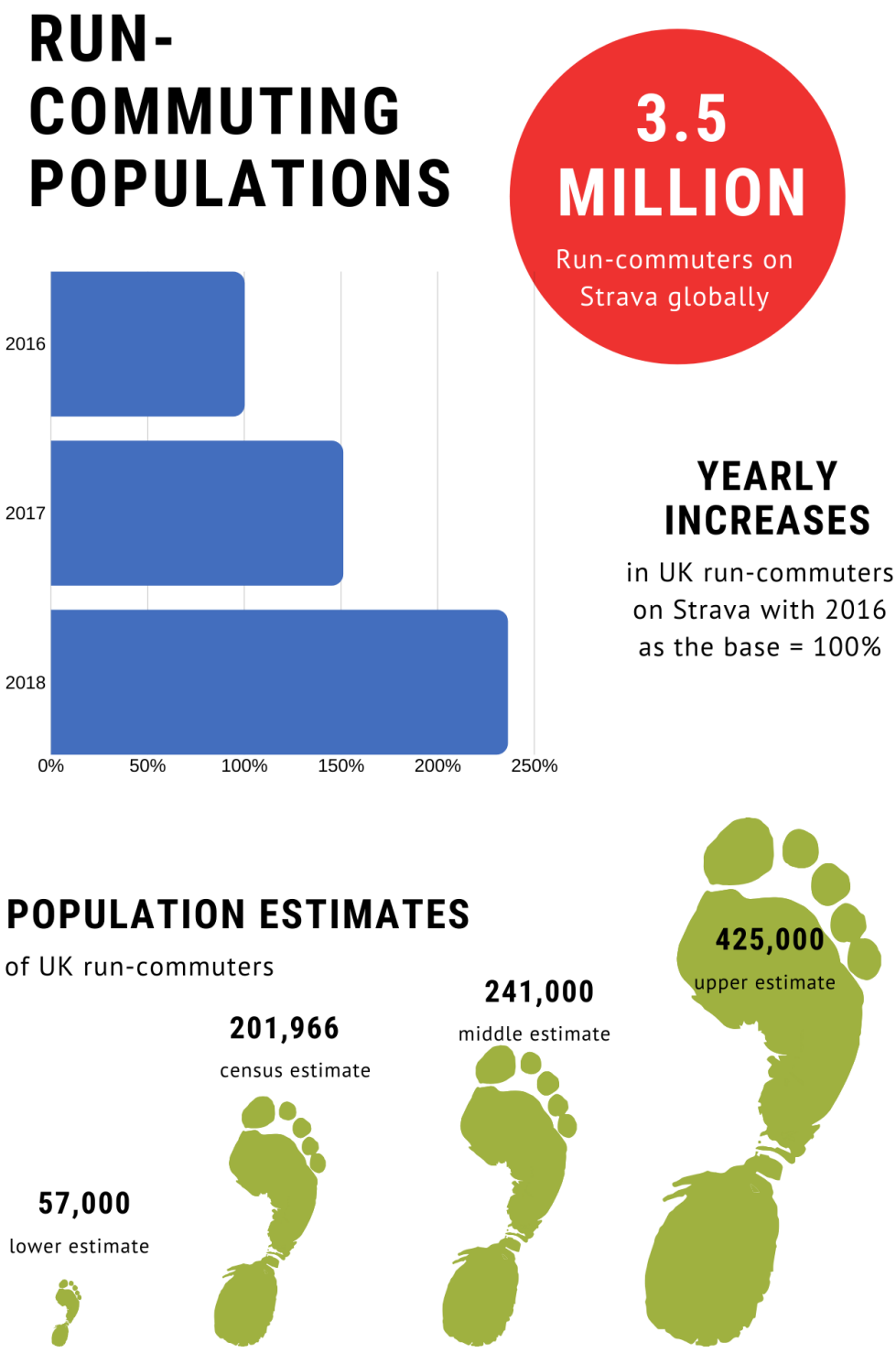
England (2018) data (as shown in Appendix 3). Together, these suggests the UK run-commuting population falls between 57,000 and around 425,000. The midway estimation would be around a quarter of a million, standing at 241,000 (Figure 5.2). These rough figures are also corroborated by estimations possible from the 2011 census data (Office for National Statistics, 2019a) regarding those who travel to work on foot. Assuming that above a certain distance (suggested as 10km – see Appendix 3) on foot commutes are more likely to be made by running than walking, there could be a potential run-commuting population of 201,966. This falls towards the middle of the estimations made from Strava's data.

The proxies, suggestions and estimations sewn together above, suggest that the number of run-commuters in the UK lies in the low hundreds of thousands. While it is not possible at this time to develop an accurate approximation as each estimation has its own flaws (see Appendix 3), an estimate range between 57,000 and 425,000 has been established, with a middling approximation of 241,000. These figures potentially represent between 0.22% and 1.63% of a workforce of 26 million people (Office for National Statistics, 2019a). In terms of active commuting modes, these figures place run-commuting as a more marginal commuting option that other active commuting options like walking or cycling (Department for Transport 2017a). However, the data sources explored in this section also indicate a rapidly increasing number of run-commuters. While this is likely to be exaggerated by the increasing numbers of people using the platforms the data is derived from, these data sources indicate continuing growth in run-commuting.

Demographics

But who are run-commuters? The survey conducted for this project reveals varied insights into the demographics of run-commuting in the UK, which this section will present critically, identifying how run-commuting enablement and constraint relate to various demographic factors, including employment, age, gender, income, education and ethnicity, highlighting some of the politics of run-commuting in the process.

Figure 5.2 Run-commuting populations

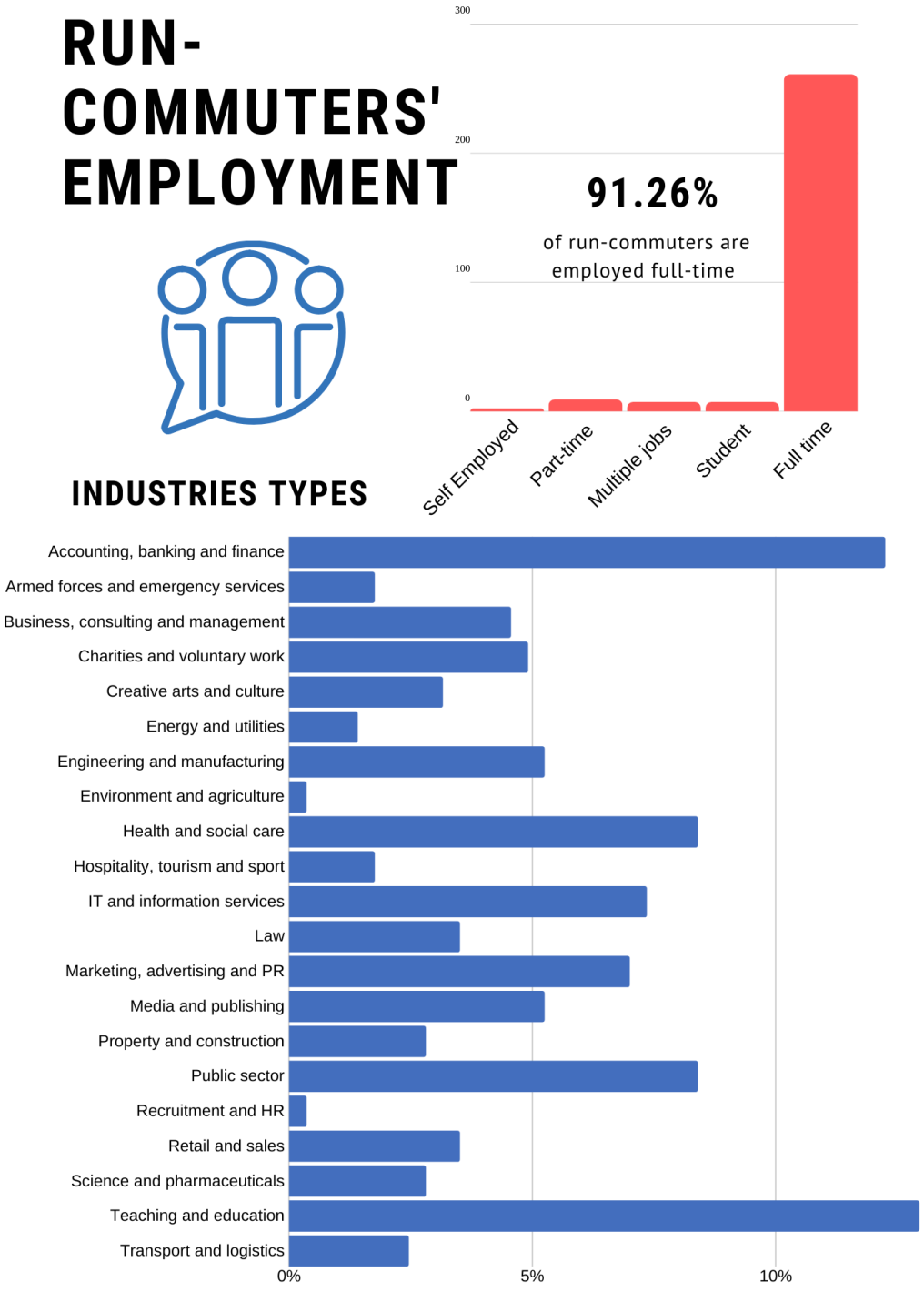


Employment

Perhaps most obviously to begin with, run-commuters are overwhelmingly those part of the workforce. Only 2.45% of respondent to the survey were not in employment, and these were all students. As shown in Figure 5.3, the vast majority (91.26%) of run-commuters are also in full-time employment, higher than the UK wide figure of 73.72% of the labour market (Office for National Statistics, 2019b). This suggests there are some enabling characteristics of full-time working, which somehow encourage run-commuting, and likewise, elements of part-time or multiple-job working may constrain run-commuting rates. Here, both the positive and negative forms of enablement discussed at the top of this chapter may be in play. Full-time working may provide various benefits and facilities to run-commuters to help facilitate their practice (discussed further in Chapter 8), but also contribute to the time-poor nature of practitioners (discussed further in Chapter 6) which creates the need to run-commute in the first place. This tension, that work can provide solutions for run-commuting while simultaneously contributing to conditions that necessitate it, is important and will be explored further throughout the thesis.

The industry run-commuters work in also appears to have a bearing on run-commuting rates. Run-commuters are spread unevenly across industry areas, with a couple of key areas emerging (Figure 5.3). Teaching and education (12.94%), and accounting, banking and finance (12.24%) were particularly notable industry areas in which run-commuters worked, accounting for around 25% of all run-commuters. Other prominent industries include health and social care; IT and information services; marketing, advertising and PR; and the public sector. Stereotypically, many of these sectors would be the city-centre based industries anticipated from the map of run-commuters workplace locations. A high presence of accounting, banking and finance here aligns with the prominence of Canary Wharf within London's run-commuting geography. However, the significance of teaching and education, and health and social care here, which are not so heavily tied to city-centre locations, suggests more than just location is important to the trends presented here. For example, these are generally higher-paying, professional industries, associated with the middle and upper classes, who have an increased propensity for running (discussed below). As will be explored further in Chapter 8, this implies that some

Figure 5.3 Employment



industries enable, promote and facilitate run-commuting in particular ways, while others constrain it. These factors could relate to a range of physical facilities, workplace cultures and practices, and wider work environments. What seems notable at this stage is the generally office-based environment and therefore sedentary nature of these industries. Such sedentariness at work often creates the need/desire for physical activity outside of the workplace and feeds into running participation (Shipway and Holloway, 2010).

More physically inclined jobs are conspicuous in their absence within the industries of run-commuters, and such absences demonstrate potential constraining factors to run-commuting participation. Run-commuters appear unlikely to work in the armed forces, environment or agriculture, all of which may require increased physical exertion at work. They are also less likely to work in recruitment and HR, hospitality, tourism and sport, and energy and utilities. As this thesis is focussed on those who do run-commute rather than do not, the reasons for the lower prevalence in these industries is less clear. The structures of these industries could be influential here, possibly in presenting constraining factors surrounding multiple work sites, seasonal employment, lower pay, home working, inadequate facilities or dress requirements. Unfortunately, a more precise interrogation of this is beyond the scope of this thesis. What is clear, however, is that the industry run-commuters work in has an influence on the ability and proclivity to run-commute, with different industries and workplace settings offering different enabling and constraining factors. As such, work practices are one of the key practices run-commuting is bundled with, which is explored more in Chapter 8 where the hows, whys and implications of these connections are more fully explored.

Age and gender

Along with employment, gender and age appear to be significant, presenting some of the key politics of mobility within the practice. In an absolute sense, more run-commuters are male than female, accounting for 62.46% of run-commuters (Figure 5.4). This may be expected, as gender has been proved to be important in active-commuting rates for many reasons. Trip-chaining - the linking of successive destinations within one journey (though the term has multiple conceptualisations - see Primerano et al, 2008) - is one such reason and results from the share of other

on-commute and domestic duties falling disproportionately on females (Turner and Grieco, 2000; Schwanen, 2007; Edmond et al, 2009; Hanson, 2010). This subsequently decreases opportunities for active commuting. That said, the gender ratio in run-commuting is more equal than may have been expected. There is a gender imbalance in the UK workforce with a 53.54% - 46.54% split in favour of males (The World Bank, 2018), which feeds into a higher rate of commuting among males, with females on average commuting 21.6% less (Department for Transport, 2017a). There is a slight gender imbalance in running rates more widely as well, with females accounting for 45.9% of people in England who ran at least twice in the last 28 days (Sport England, 2018, see Figure 5.4). Therefore, an even gender split is unlikely for run-commuting. Moreover, comparing run-commuting to cycle-commuting proves instructive in understanding the gender balance shown here. As will become apparent throughout the thesis, run-commuting and cycle-commuting have many similarities that affect participation and act to bundle or complex the two practices. However, the gendering of the two practices differ. Cycle-commuting is heavily gendered with only 25.9% of cycle-commuters being female in the UK (Office of National Statistics, 2018). Run-commuting appears to demonstrate greater parity between the genders here and safety could be a significant factor here (Heinen et al, 2011; Heesch et al, 2012; Chataway et al, 2014; Aldred et al, 2017). Running to work may perceivably carry with it less risks than cycling to work in the carriageway. This indicates that run-commuting may be an active commuting mode that has greater cross-gender appeal and enables active commuting more widely than cycling to work.

Age also appears to play an important role in run-commuting rates, as seen in Figure 5.4. As may be expected when looking at commuting, there were no run-commuters outside the typical workforce age, so below the age of 18 or above 65. Overall, run-commuting rates appear to rise quite quickly from the late 20s, peaking in the late 30s and rapidly dropping off from the late 40s. In general, run-commuters are older than runners more widely. The 2018 Active People Survey (Sport England, 2018), shows that 46.1% of runners are aged 16 – 34 whereas only 41.28% are aged between 35 – 54. This latter age group represents the largest group of run-commuters however, with 55.95% of run-commuters whereas and only 39.86% are aged between 18 -34. This suggests that age impacts quite heavily on run-commuting rates. Initially there appears to be factors that enable run-commuting as people get older, for this to decrease rapidly after the age of 50. As discussed more in the next chapter, the need and desire to run-commute often derives from a shortage of time

in which to run in daily life. There are many factors that could increase time-pressures more greatly as people enter their late twenties, thirties and into their forties. Career development and progression can increase work demands during this time-period as can increasing family commitments and parenthood, which most commonly occur during this age range. The drop-off in run-commuting post-50 could be a result of both decreasing time demands from these factors (such as children becoming independent) as well as a decreasing need/desire to run – only 12.62% of runners are aged over 55 (Sport England, 2018). These factors will be discussed more fully in the thesis, but run-commuting rates appear to tie into the rhythms of people's work, home and exercise lives over their life course, implying these are practices that run-commuting is bundled with.

These factors are not necessarily common between all run-commuters however and there is an interesting intersection between age and gender in run-commuting rates. As seen in Figure 5.4, female run-commuters tend to be younger than male-run-commuters, the modal age category for each being 25-29 and 40-44 respectively. It is possible that such a pattern is caused by different motivations or factors for taking-up run-commuting, and having children could be crucial here. The average age of a mother at time of birth in the UK is 30.4 years old and a father is 33.3 years old (Office for National Statistics, 2017a). The modal age categories for each gender suggests that females are more likely to run-commute before children and males after children. Therefore, the time constraints they face that enable run-commuting are not necessarily the same. This is supported by analysing the data concerning the number of children/dependants run-commuters have (Figure 5.4). Only 40.64% of run-commuters have children and these are overwhelmingly male run-commuters. Just over 50% of male run-commuters have children whereas just over 20% of female run-commuters have children. This gives further credence to the idea that having children may be an enabler for male run-commuters but a constraint for female run-commuters.

There are likely to be a couple of reasons for this age-related gender imbalance. Firstly, some mothers do not return to work after having children - only 65.1% of mothers whose youngest child is a toddler are in employment (Office for National Statistics, 2017b). Secondly, the aforementioned reduced opportunities for active-commuting stemming from the unequal division of domestic labour (Breen and Cooke, 2005; Lyonette and Compton, 2015) that mothers face would also bear influence here (Aldred et al, 2016). This is further supported by observing the ages

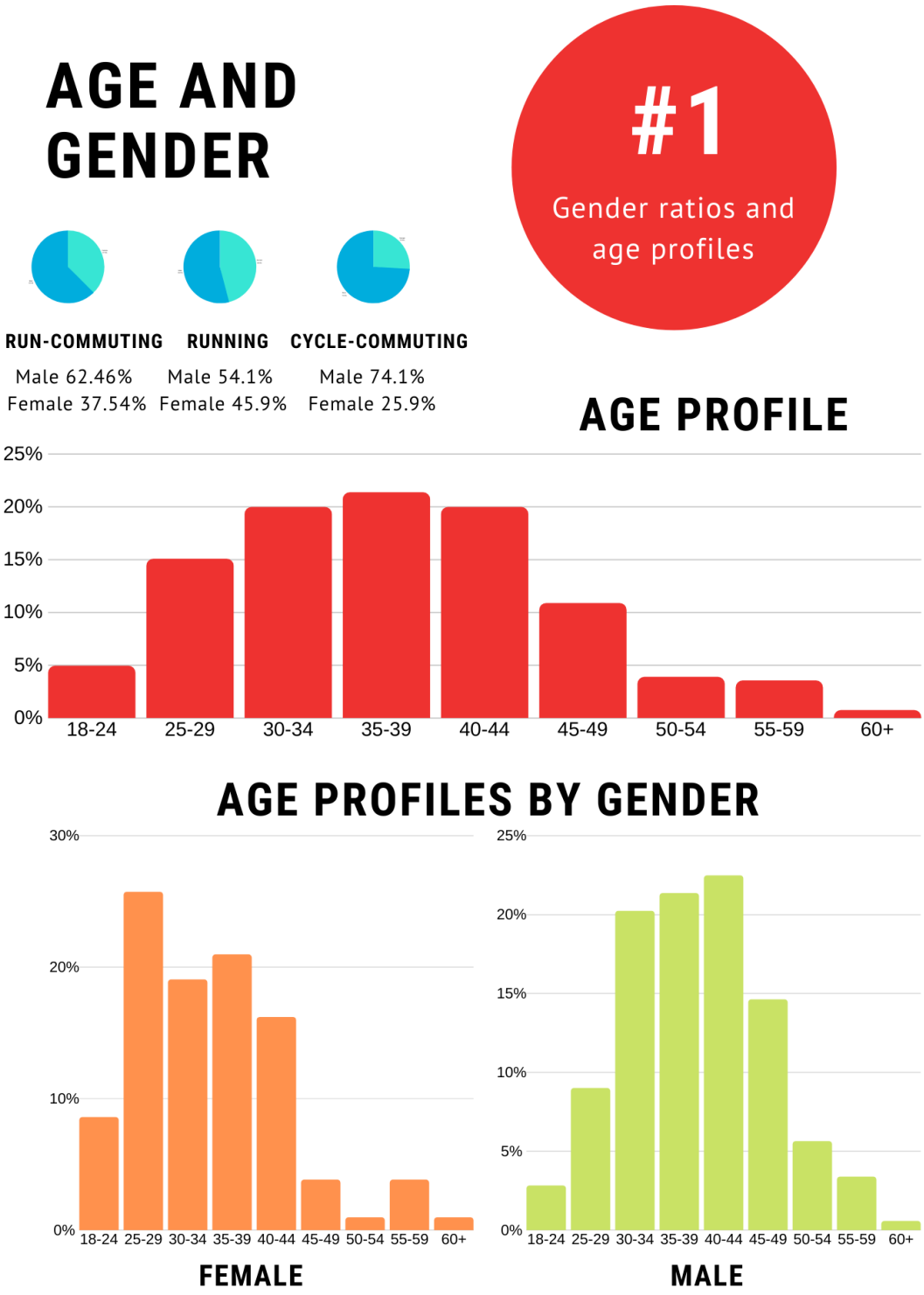
of run-commuters with dependants as well as their living arrangements (Figure 5.4). This shows that in the modal age-category for female run-commuters (25-29) there are very few run-commuting parents, whereas they are in the majority for the male modal age-category (40-44). Likewise, male run-commuters are most likely to live in a two-parent household with young children, whereas female run-commuters are most likely to be co-habiting or married but with no children. This highlights the impact family-responsibilities have on mobility and commuting options (Holdsworth, 2013), as well as wider exercise opportunities (Ronkainen et al, 2018a). The majority of run-commuters seemingly plan their commute and exercise activities to fit in with other people and rhythms – be that partners or children. For some, this means run-commuting becomes a desirable practice to take up, for others it becomes an infeasible prospect. Age and gender are crucial influences within this and demonstrates the practices of home life and parenthood are inherently bundled within run-commuting practices.

Income, education and ethnicity

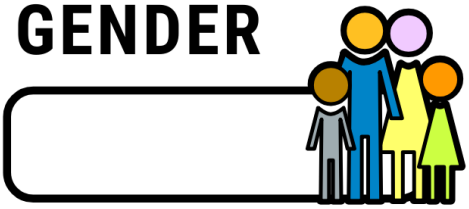
As already hinted at when analysing the home locations and industry areas of run-commuters, income appears to be another important factor in run-commuting rates. The modal average household income in the UK is £32,000 - £47,999 (Office for National Statistics, 2019c), whereas the modal average household income for run-commuters in my survey was £70,00 - £99,999, with a 49.09% of respondents having this household income or higher (Figure 5.5). While the high presence of London-based run-commuters is likely to be influential here (as incomes and cost of living are higher here than the rest of the UK), income having an impact on run-commuting rates may seem a little peculiar, as run-commuting is not an expensive practice to undertake. In theory, it could be a cheap transport option for all, but this does not mean it is accessible to all. This suggests that there must be some enabling factors in the living, working or cultural aspects of higher-income earners that encourage run-commuting or constraining factors in lower income earners that make run-commuting undesirable or unfeasible. In fact, both are likely.

Firstly, running in general is more popular with higher-income earners and those who fall within upper social grades (Sport England, 2018). While the sedentary nature of higher income, white collar jobs may create more demand for physical

Figure 5.4 Age and gender



AGE AND GENDER

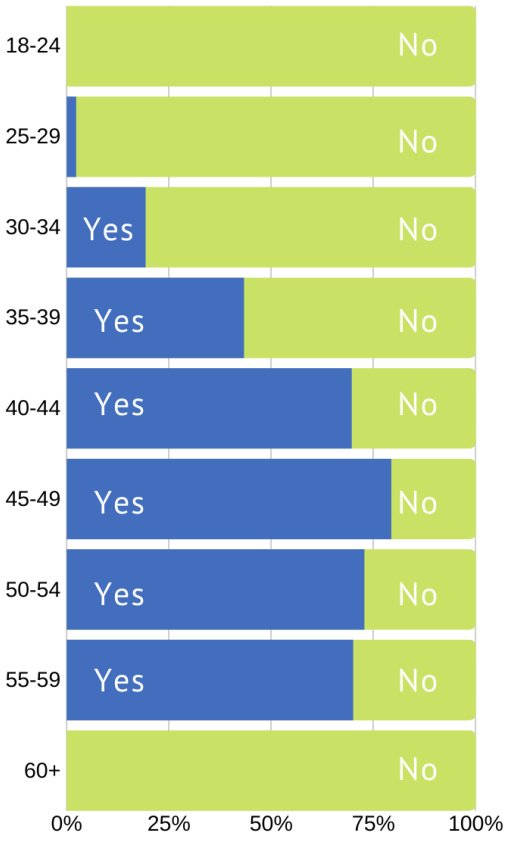


#2

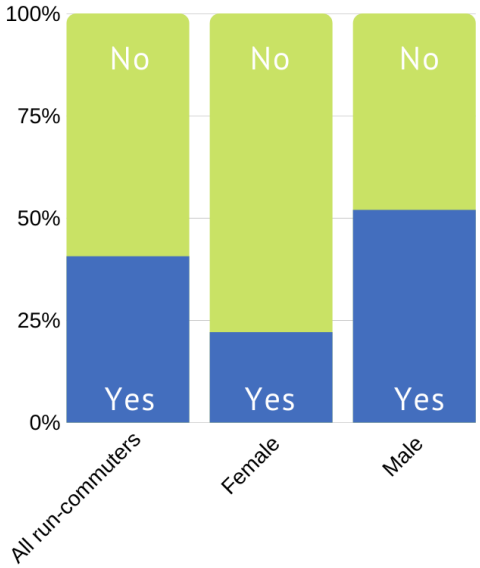
Impact of dependants

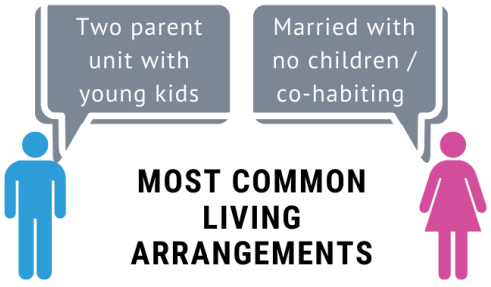
DO YOU HAVE CHILDREN / DEPENDANTS?

BY AGE



BY GENDER





MOST COMMON LIVING ARRANGEMENTS

activity than more physically intensive but lower paid jobs, running's popularity among higher income earners is a more cultural affair. Running and its symbolic value are more widely tied to middle- and upper-class identities, with individualism, challenge, self-development and travel being common traits (Abbas, 2004; Ronkainen et al, 2018b). Indeed, as Caudwell (2015: p.102) observes: 'many aspects of running are contingent on class privilege and the embodiment of this privilege'. This may be a politics inherent in run-commuting and people's propensity for it but it also feeds into the practice and its commercialisation. While running itself may have a very low cost of entry, participating in running events does not with average marathon entry costs in the USA almost doubling between 2006 and 2017 to $123 per event (Miller, 2017). This not only reflects the higher-income of runners but may present a barrier to those on lower incomes to participate. Marathon running, or training for a marathon more precisely, featured regularly in respondents' discussions of run-commuting, indicating that run-commuters are often engaged in running at this level, something that is more financially and temporally demanding.

While running, and subsequently run-commuting, may be something of a trend for higher-income earners, there is likely to be more than just culture, symbolic status and sedentary jobs causing this. There are certain privileges higher income earners may have, which enable run-commuting: having a full-time job contributes to the time-pressures that create the background conditions for run-commuting, having a (mostly) fixed work location enables facilities to be identified and utilised, being higher on the career ladder (which comes with a higher income) may allow greater flexibility and autonomy in working patterns that enable run-commuting, having a greater income enables more centrally-located (and therefore expensive) property to be purchased resulting in a runnable commuting distance, and higher incomes increase the likelihood of outsourcing domestic, care and parental labour resulting in improved opportunities to engage in leisure activities (Mattingly, 2001; Van der Lippe et al, 2004; De Ruijter and Van der Lippe, 2007). While not all of these will apply to all run-commuters, these are some common privileges associated with higher incomes that can encourage and facilitate run-commuting, which would prove constraining for those on lower incomes. As such, income is a key social differentiator in run-commuting practices and also demonstrates the bundling of working, domestic and parenting practices with run-commuting practices.

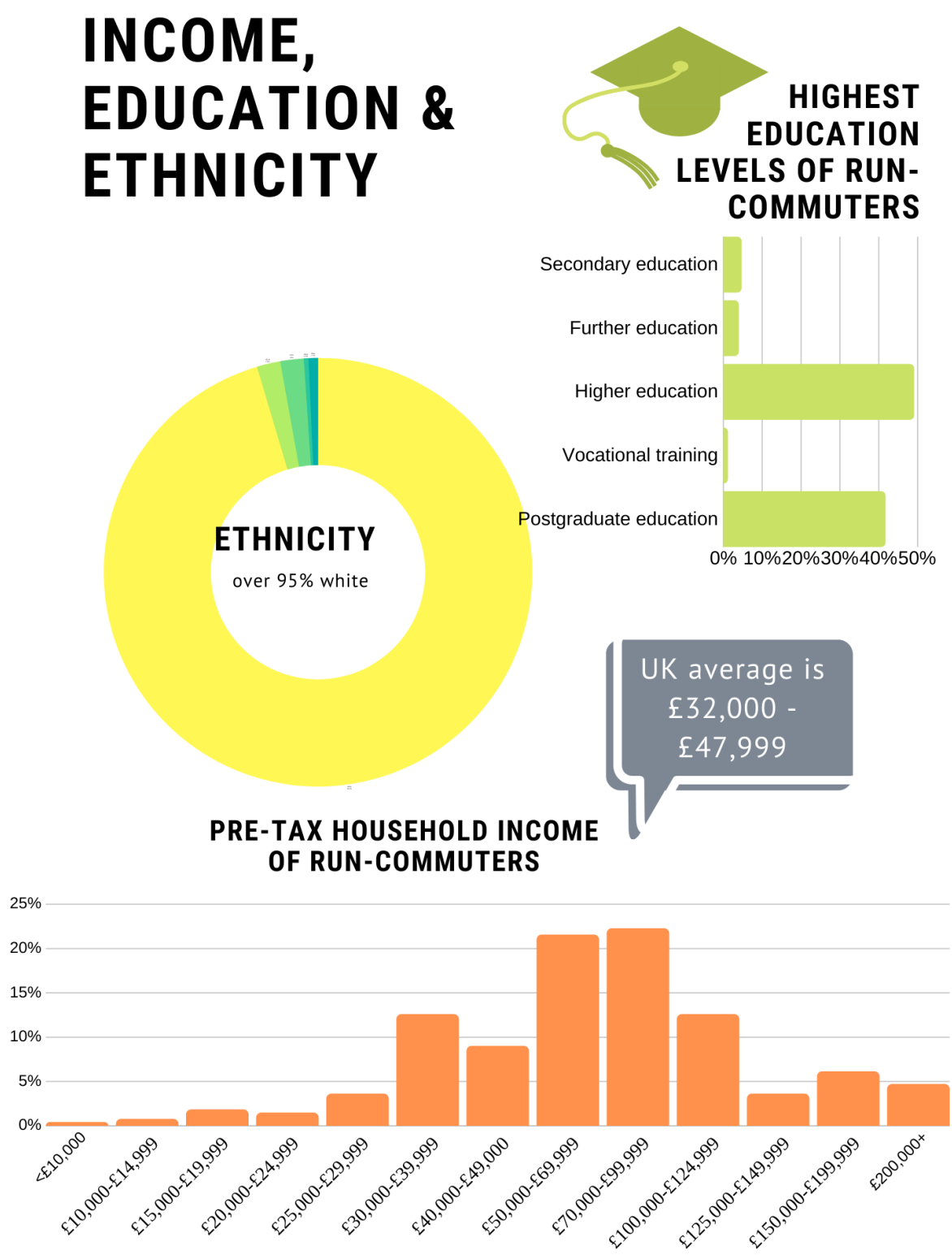
Two other striking demographic traits of run-commuters are their educational level and ethnicity. Run-commuters are overwhelmingly made up of people with

university-level education (Figure 5.5). Over 90% of run-commuters are qualified to at least degree-level, with 41.61% of run-commuters having postgraduate education. This seems to be strikingly high but is likely related to both high presence of higher income jobs, which these qualifications may be necessary for, and the middle-class symbolism of running, which going to university also contributes to. Indeed, running more generally is most popular with university-educated people. According to the latest Active Lives Survey (Sport England, 2018), 20% of university-educated people run, a figure which decreases with educational level. Run-commuting rates appears to be much greater among more highly-educated people than in running more widely however, suggesting this is the result of wider factors, and likely a variety of those discussed so far and below.

The other prominent trait of run-commuters is their ethnicity. Run-commuting is a racialised practice, one which overwhelmingly white (Figure 5.5). Over 95% of run-commuters are white, with White British forming the largest cohort (80.85%). There is a whiteness to run-commuting that is not as apparent in running more widely where participation rates among other ethnicities are roughly comparable (Sport England, 2018). Therefore, other factors must be at play that serve to make run-commuting a viable option for white people but not so much for other ethnicities. While income may have influence here, white households tend to have higher incomes (Department for Work and Pensions, 2019), as well as different practices of domestic labour (Kan and Laurie, 2018), it is nowhere near the ethnic divide seen within run-commuting rates. These patterns are, therefore, likely to result from a more complex set of cultural and social factors that affect different people's proclivity for run-commuting. Sadly, as this project only engaged with people who do run-commute rather than those that don't, this is not an aspect that could be explored further. Consequently, this point will not be picked up further throughout this thesis, despite it being an important factor of run-commuting, in its politics, and represents a limitation of this study.

The demographics of run-commuting show who run-commuters are and thus what demographic characteristics are likely to encourage run-commuting and those that constrain it. Within this, we see some of the politics and social differentiations bound up in the practice, with middle-aged white men in higher income professional jobs and with higher-level education most likely to be run-commuters. Women are run-commuters too (still predominantly white, highly educated and professional employed) but the impact of parenthood on their abilities to run-commute seems

Figure 5.5 Income, education and ethnicity



to result in female run-commuters generally being younger. As well as serving to show the gendered, aged, classed and racialised nature of the practice, this overview also demonstrates some of the other practices bundled with run-commuting, including parenting, domestic labour, work and wider running practices. In different ways, these are important in enabling and limiting run-commuting as will be further unpacked in this thesis.

Commuting basics

Having explored who run-commuters are and where they are, we now turn attention to movements themselves, beginning with the nature of the commute and commuting practices. Again, here I am interested in understanding the broad trends within run-commuting as well as factors that enable and constrain the practice in various ways. Distance is one of the raw materials of any commute and takes on extra importance in active commuting, where more effort is required per metre. As seen in Figure 5.6, there is surprising variety in the total distance run-commuters estimated they need to cover on their commute. Given the physical exertion, fitness and time required to run long distances, it may be anticipated that run-commuters only need to commute a relatively short distance. While this is certainly true for the majority of run-commuters, just over three quarters have a commute of under 10 miles and the modal and median commute distance was six miles, some run-commuters have a much larger distance to cover on a commute. The total range of commuting distances was 99 miles and 3.5% of run-commuters had a commuting distance above 50 miles. Most people would consider this too far to run but in such instances, running is likely being utilised to complete part of the commute rather than the entirety of it, bundling multiple mobile practices into one commute. This idea is explored in more depth in the multi-modalities section below. Similarly, very short commuting distances were rare. No run-commuters reported a commute of under a mile and only a handful below two miles. This may be slightly surprising, as shorter distance would appear to lend themselves to a run-commute, but it raises the idea of runnable distances. As will be elaborated further below, just as some distances may be too far to run, others would be classed as too short to bother. Relatedly, when reporting their total commute distance, many respondents made it known that they would often run further than the commute necessitated, increasing

the distance of their commute to fulfil their running needs/desires (see also Chapter 9):

> **Survey respondent #116 (Female 30-34):** 3, but I extend my commutes to 6-7 miles.
>
> **Survey respondent #271 (Female 35-39):** I (I take the long way home).

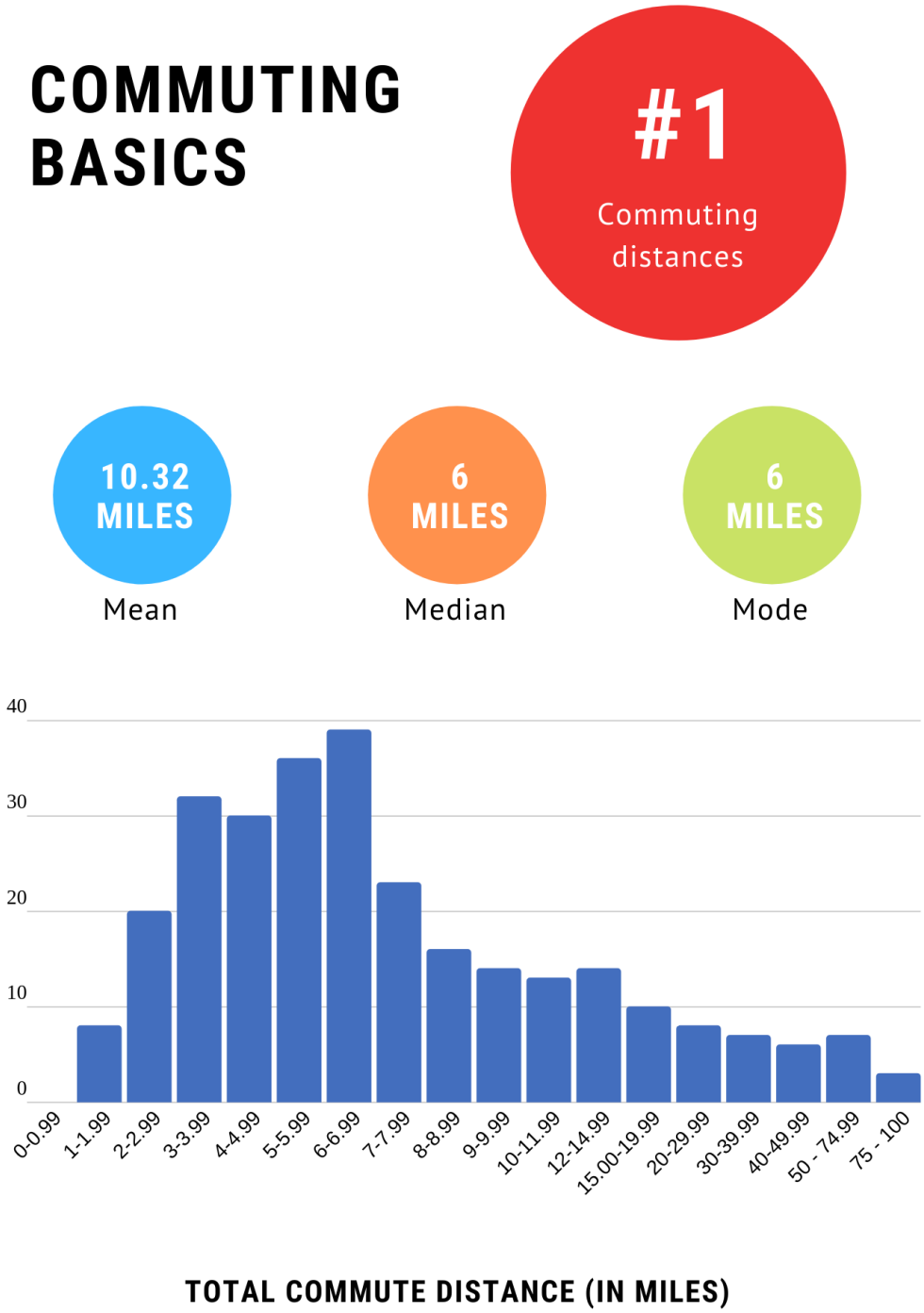
So while there are interesting questions to ask about the extremes of the commuting distance spectrum, a clear bulk is evident with the vast majority of run-commuters needing to commute between two and eight miles each way. This may still seem quite far for non-runners but is likely to be within most runners' capabilities and repertoires.

Compared to average commuting distances in the UK, run-commuters have a similar total commute distance to travel. On the whole, commuting distances in the UK have been getting longer and clocked an average of 8.8 miles in 2013/2014 (Department for Transport, 2017b). While this may imply that run-commuters generally have shorter commutes, there may be differences in how the averages are calculated (see Appendix 4 for this discussion), which would alter this comparison. Furthermore, the London-skew within the run-commuting population is also likely to impact the average commute distance for respondents. An average Londoner's commute is further at 9.1 miles (Census Information Scheme, 2015). Therefore, for the purposes of identifying broad patterns and trends rather than precise data comparisons, as is the aim of this chapter, it suffices to say that run-commuters roughly have an average total distance they need to cover on their commute. Crucially, in understanding the enabling and constraining factors of run-commuting, this implies that distance may not be as crucial as first imagined. Yes, most run-commuters have a total commuting distance around the national average or below and in this way a shorter (but not too short) total commute distance is favourable for run-commuting. But it is also a practice possible for those with longer commutes too, though less likely. Although the biggest barrier for wannabe run-commuters, distance is not the be all and end all of run-commuting practices. It is a flexible and adaptable practice, able to function as the only mode of commuting or as a stage of a commute, and able to take routes that increase and decrease distances as desired. Considering the potential of run-commuting, in this way, it is not restricted to those who live runnable distances from work and could, in theory, feature more widely within commuters' practice bundles.

Beyond distance, there are many other aspects of a commute that serve to enable or constrain. One such factor are the other tasks or duties commuters perform on the commute. This may take the form of trip-chaining or utilising travel time in order to do something else. Both have been shown to make changing transport routines and in particular developing active travel practices, more difficult (Pooley et al, 2011; Garrard et al, 2012). As such, it was not too surprising that most run-commuters reported to not having any other duties they need to undertake on the commute (Figure 5.6), which would certainly enable them to take up and sustain a run-commuting practice more easily. Yet around 30% of run-commuters do declare to having such duties. This is overwhelmingly on an occasional basis, with only 1.74% of run-commuters reporting to regularly having other duties to undertake. Important in this is household situation (Figure 5.6). Having other duties to do on the commute is much more common if you are living with others, either in the form of a partner and/or children. All of the respondents who reported to regularly having other duties to do on the commute have children. Given the gendered nature of run-commuting as a parent already discussed, this is why more male run-commuters have regular duties to do on the commute than female. Females do have (often greater) parental responsibilities, but this inhibits them from run-commuting rather than acting to enable it.

Giving the constraining effects of having other duties to do on the commute, the fact that some run-commuters do is interesting. Exploring what these responsibilities are however, reveals a plethora of mostly flexible and ad hoc duties (Figure 5.6). As discussed further below, most run-commuters do not run-commute every day and the commute is often shared between multiple transport modes over the week in a bundling of practices. Therefore, run-commuters may plan to undertake any on-commute duties during non-running commutes. As such, the relatively simple question of what commuting mode to use on any given day can require a fascinatingly complex discussion of logistics. This is touched on further below but is explored in more detail in Chapter 7. Therefore, while some run-commuters do have (ir)regular duties to undertake on the commute and manage them through the flexibility and rhythms of their bundled run-commuting practice, they are in the minority. Most run-commuters do not have any other duties to perform on the commute and their relative absence suggests this is a large barrier to run-commuting and acts to constrain people doing it.

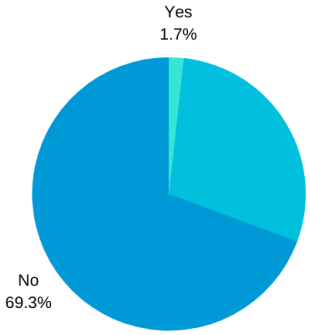
Figure 5.6 Run-commuters' commutes



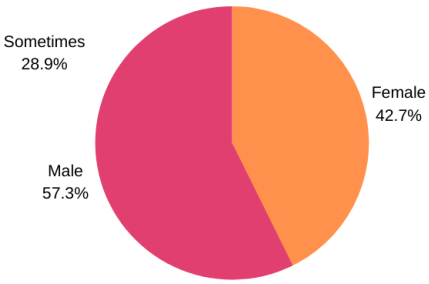
COMMUTING BASICS

#2

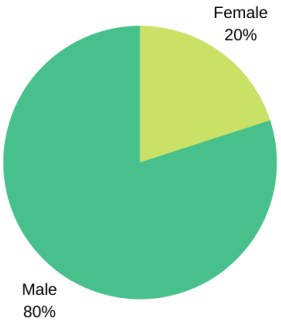
Other duties on the commute



OTHER DUTIES ON THE COMMUTE?



'SOMETIMES' GENDER PROFILE



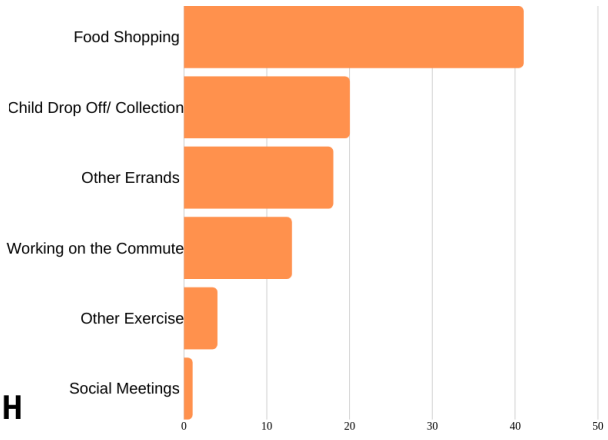
'YES' GENDER PROFILE

Married with no children / cohabiting

Two parent unit with children

MOST COMMON LIVING ARRANGEMENTS WITH DUTIES

DETAILS OF OTHER DUTIES



Run-commuting journeys

With commuting needs and parameters established above, this section explores the brute facts of run-commuting journeys themselves. This begins with a discussion of run-commuting frequencies, before exploring directions, durations and distances.

Run-commuting frequencies

As mentioned above, run-commuting is a flexible and rhythmic practice for many practitioners and this section explores this nature in more depth by considering the frequency with which it is performed. There is a temporal organisation to running (explored more in Chapter 6) resulting in rhythms of running occurring on a range of scales, from the weekly to the annual (and longer in some instances). Given the strong ties and complexing between running and run-commuting practices, a similar rhythm may be anticipated and this certainly seems to be the case when observing seasonality. While many runners run all year round, summer peaks and winter troughs are noticeable in absolute participation rates with about a third more people running in the summer months (Sport England, 2012). Respondents to my survey suggest a similar trend, though not so pronounced. As seen in Figure 5.7, the vast majority of run-commuters claim to run-commute all year round, with 91.26% doing so. Beyond this however, there is a noticeable drop over the autumn and winter months, with fewer respondents reporting they run-commute during this period. There is likely to be elements of self-reporting bias at play here (and throughout all the survey results) however, with social-desirability and recall bias functioning to perhaps over-report participation levels (Althubaiti, 2016). Indeed, the activity tracking data collected by Strava (2016) suggests a much larger peak over the summer months, with a 29% increase in run-commuting in this period. Despite the caveats surrounding Strava data discussed already in the chapter, this seasonal rhythm fits more widely with running participation trends and the temporal organisation of running, and therefore seems more probable than the self-reported data in this instance. Issues of light, inclement weather and their impact on the safety, desirability, motivations of running have been shown to affect such patterns (O'Keefe, 2018), which are also common within other active transport modes (Yang et al, 2011; Heinen et al, 2011a; Tin Tin et al, 2012; Flynn et al, 2012; St-Louis et al,

2014; Doody, 2015). This work establishes the elemental as important matter for active commuting practices (Simpson, 2019), which can be quite removed from the elemental and atmospheric nature of other commuting types (Bissell, 2018). Indeed, the seasonality of run-commuting in general is quite different to the seasonality of commuting. Commuting is a more stable practice in this regard generally occurring all year round for most people, with troughs being witnessed around key holiday periods. This is one of a number of ways in which run-commuting demonstrates greater similarities, connections and bundling to wider running practices than it does to wider commuting practices.

Another such example concerns the weekly frequency of run-commuting for participants. This frequency is the average for when practitioners are run-commuting, rather than an average over the year (so ignoring any effects of seasonality). As considered previously, most run-commuters do not run every working day, as is common with other active commuting modes (Stinson and Bhat, 2004; Heinen et al, 2010; Winters et al, 2011), although this is not that rare with around 14% of run-commuters claiming to do so (Figure 5.7). Most commonly, however, practitioners run-commute at least one-way two days a week. Those who do it one day a week follow this. This rate is accomplished as a minimum by that the vast majority (82.8%) of run-commuters (Figure 5.7). These modal results broadly align with the frequency of 1.55 run-commutes per week reported by Strava (2018) and further indicates that run-commuting may be more entwined with running than it is commuting. Although commuting is no longer a practice that occurs every working day for all workers (Department for Transport, 2017b), it still occurs on most weekdays for the majority. While some run-commuters mirror this pattern, more commonly they only run their commute on a portion of working days, with other transport modes being utilised for other commuting journeys in a bundling of commuting practices. This mirrors more closely the rhythms of running than commuting.

Further mirroring is visible in the days of the week run-commuters choose to run (Figure 5.7). Even though there is a reasonable spread across the weekdays, midweek seems to be more popular for run-commuting than either a Monday, Friday or the weekend. Given the convention of racing or undertaking a long run on the weekend in running practices (Smith, 2002), fewer people run-commuting at the ends of the week makes sense. This provides recovery after and rest before these more exertive running activities. However, as run-commuting is not a practice

purely about running, the midweek peak in run-commuting participation could also be tied to wider home, life or working rhythms/demands. For example, and as explored later in Chapter 7, it is not uncommon for non-run-commute journeys to be used as part of the logistics for run-commuting as these different practices form complexes, scheduling and synchronising the stuff of run-commuting. Mondays and Fridays may be used to transport the things at either end of the week, such as clothes and towels, that often need to commute with us but may be difficult to carry while running. The issue of encumbrance in run-commuting is a focus of Chapter 10.

Once more, I was quite surprised by the range of run-commuting frequencies reported by respondents. While the averages and commonalities are apparent, it is also noteworthy that many run-commute more than this, as well as less than this. This further exhibits not only the flexibility of the practice but also the different ways in which it provides the time-management service that many run-commuters seek (discussed in Chapter 6). For some, this is almost a daily affair whereas for others this need is much less frequent. However, averages and aggregates only tell us so much and in some instances can represent the average, but non-existent, run-commuter. In regards to frequency, there are again aged and gendered dimensions to this. In general, male run-commuters tend to run-commute more frequently than female ones, with almost half run-commuting three days or more per week, and almost 20% run-commuting five days a week or more (Figure 5.7). Female run-commuters, on the other hand, tend to run less frequently, displaying a greater number of more occasional runners and fewer three days or more runners (Figure 5.7). The aged dimensions are more complex however. The only hugely noticeable trend is a large decrease in run-commuting frequency for those aged 60 or older (Figure 5.7). Sample sizes could be influential here, with those age categories with fewer respondents showing more erratic frequency trends and those with larger sample sizes displaying more even splits between frequency options. These deficiencies noted, the survey still indicates that there is a gendering to run-commuting frequencies, as well as an aged dimension, which only becomes perceptible towards the end of people's working lives.

The range of frequencies and the connections they may have to wider rhythms of running, work, life and home begs the question of what influences the decision to run-commute on any given day. The responses to this question were impressively wide-ranging and multiplicitous. Commuting choices and routines are often deemed

to be habitual and unthinking (Schwanen et al, 2012; Bissell, 2014a; Walker et al, 2015; Cass and Faulconbridge, 2016). But akin to other active transport modes (Heinen et al, 2010), run-commuting frequencies and decision-making demonstrate a large degree of logistics planning in determining and actuating run-commuting. As many of these frequency factors are discussed more fully within Part Three, I will only provide a brief overview here and a summary is provided in Figure 5.7.

The three factors that appear as the most important in determining whether to run-commute on any given day relate to the practices most closely enmeshed in run-commuting – running, work and home life. The largest single factor was the requirements of a running/fitness schedule or plan. This links in with the earlier suggestion that run-commuters' rhythms were tied into rhythms of running, demonstrating that the presence of a formal plan or schedule is orchestrating the movements of many run-commuters. They conduct the rhythm of when run-commuters need to run, as well as how far and what type. The second largest influence pertained to the realm of work and the shorter-term fluctuations and vagaries of work practices that can enable and constrain run-commuting in different ways. Run-commuters most commonly explained that the spatial and temporal structures of work, in terms of location, hours and commitments determine the possibility of run-commuting on any day (as discussed in Chapter 8). The third most influential category concerns practices of home life. As explored further in Chapter 7, this is the realm that run-commuters felt was being too greatly impacted by their run practice and thus prompted the need for run-commuting in the first place. Hence, factors of home life also bears much influence on the possibilities of run-commuting on any given day. Most commonly, run-commuters reported the influences upon run-commuting in this sphere to concern the commitments or demands of themselves, partners, dependants and family/friends.

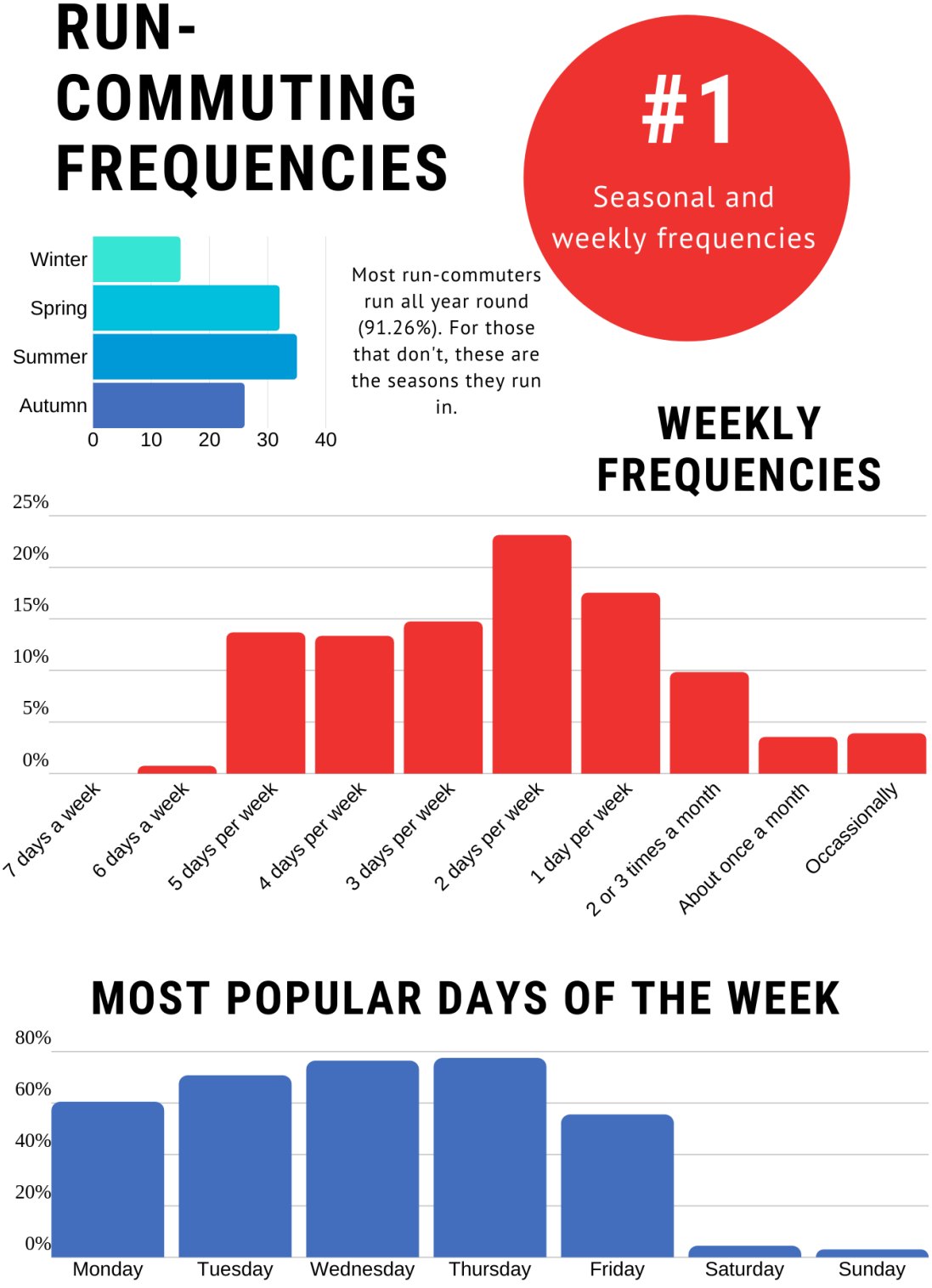
The presence of these three factors within respondents' answers was markedly higher than other influences. Thus, implying that matters of home, work and running are of chief concern within run-commuting and are those most closely bundled/complexed within run-commuting practices. They are also factors more rarely implicated in the rates of other active transport modes. For example, while the review by Heinen et al (2010) demonstrates the variety of factors influencing cycling-commuting frequency, they tend to concern the built environment, infrastructure, topography, climate, weather, socio-economic, psychological factors, travel time and safety rather than exercise, work or home demands. Thus, despite

the many similarities between run-commuting and other active commuting modes that become apparent throughout this thesis, this is one notable area in which they differ.

Other factors reported in Figure 5.7 do show similarities to other commuting modes, for example issues of weather, climate and light also apparent within other active transport modes (Simpson, 2019– see also Chapter 9). However, there are a couple of other points of divergence in factors affecting frequency between run-commuting and other active commuting practices. A case in point, the issue of what needs to be carried tends to be a more significant consideration in run-commuting. Many things we need at both home and work must also commute. Thus, encumbrances and the location of those encumbrances were vital considerations in run-commuting frequencies. Carrying things while running is difficult and can have a dramatic impact on running rhythms, experiences and flows (Csikszentmihalyi et al, 2017). Therefore, the run-commuting assemblage becomes a significant aspect of the practice and is explored further in Chapter 10. Similarly, the influence of energy and fitness, in both medicalised and affective articulations, is more pronounced in run-commuting than other active commutes. Running abilities, energy levels, injuries, general health, moods, emotions, and interest all factored on run-commuters decision to run on any given day. The relative exertion and cardiovascular impact of running a commute compared to walking or cycling one causes this divergence. Indeed, fitness only received passing reference in Heinen et al's (2010) review of factors that affect cycle-commuting frequency. Some run-commuters need the commute to function as a workout and achieve the equivalent physical exertion they would on an ordinary run. This is less likely to be the case for cycling commuting. Although it does occur (see Larsen, 2018a), the time and space required to function as a workout/training session is often not possible on the commute. Thus, issues of fitness, physical exertion and affective states mark an interesting point of divergence between run-commuting and other active modes.

The range of factors influencing run-commuting on any given day touched upon here and shown in Figure 5.7 express the deeply entangled nature of run-commuting with other rhythms of life, the bundles and complexes of practices which exist in run-commuting, as well as the complex logistics involved in accomplishing run-commuting. This places much emphasis on how run-commuting is actually

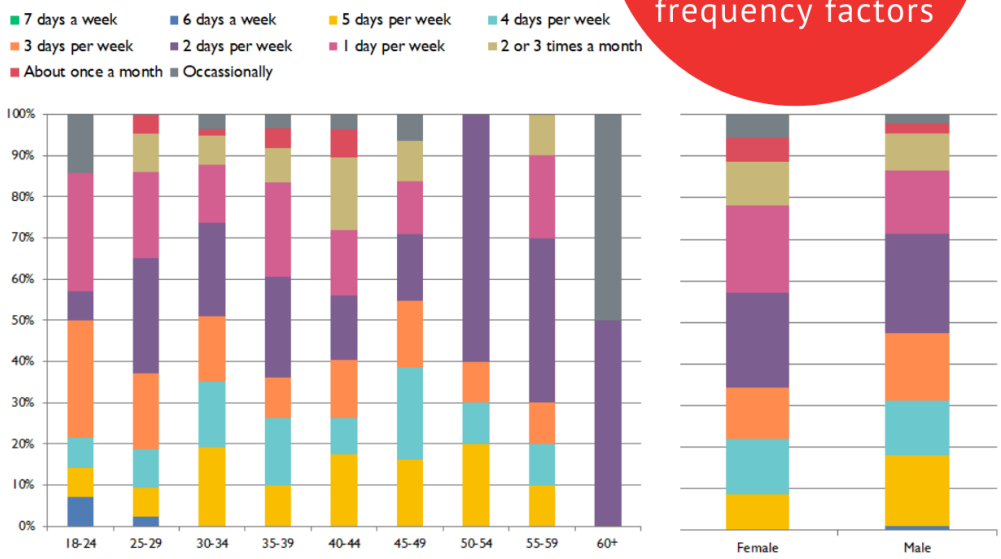
Figure 5.7 Run-commuting frequencies



RUN-COMMUTING FREQUENCIES

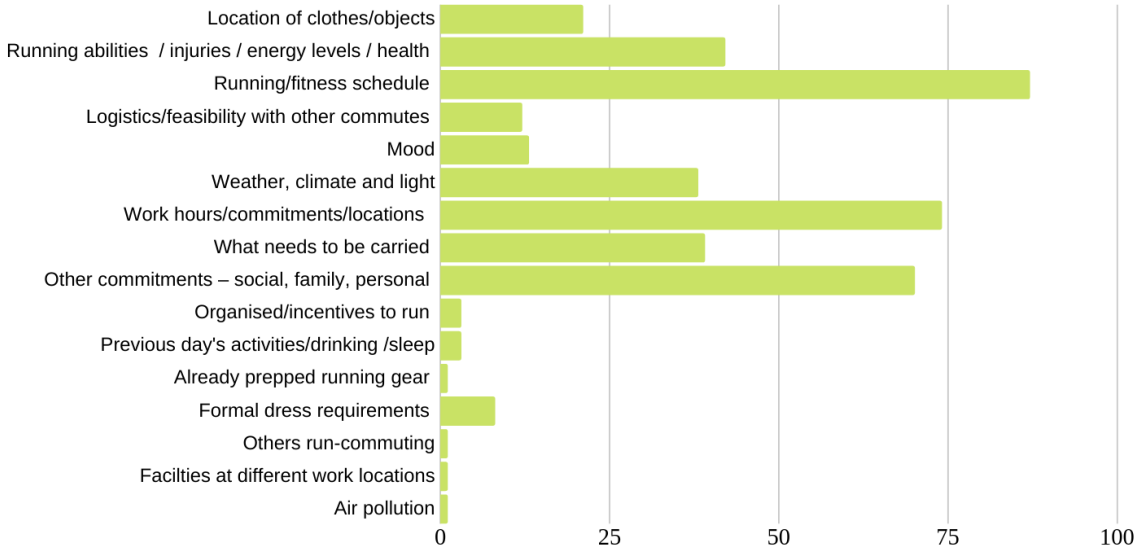
#2

Gender, age and frequency factors



ABOVE: FREQUENCY BY AGE (L) AND GENDER (R)

BELOW: FACTORS INFLUENCING FREQUENCY



accomplished and the processes that accompany the practice. These various factors will be attended to throughout the rest of the thesis, but also serve to demarcate run-commuting from wider practices of active commuting and running. Some of the enabling and constraining factors discussed above will be similar (see Heinen et al, 2011a; 2011b), but the extent and variety of them signifies points of divergence in these related practices. Responding to these influencing factors, it becomes clear that run-commuting, while predominantly guided by the bundled practices of running, work and home, is a mutable practice. It offers flexibility to fit in with life in different ways for different people, something evident in the range of frequencies exhibited by practitioners and the vast array of things that can affect the taking place of run-commuting. Despite this, the majority of run-commuters aim to run-commute at least one day a week, with the most common frequency being two days a week. This is a rhythm indicating a greater affinity with running temporalities than commuting ones.

Run-commuting directions

Having examined when run-commuting journeys take place and the influences upon this, the question remains as to what these journeys actually look like. Alongside frequency, the direction of the run-commute is an integral element determining the parameters of run-commuting. Direction contributes to the plausibility of different journeys, affecting the brute facts of different run-commuters' practices. As seen in Figure 5.8, there appears to be a relatively equal spread among different configurations of run-commuting journeys. Most popular of these options is for run-commuters to pull double duty, running both of their commutes in a day. This is one area in which the rhythms of run-commuting aligns more closely with the commuting than running, going against common running temporalities where multiple runs in a day are less likely. Double run-commuting is obviously more exertive than only running one way and changes the logistics involved in making run-commuting happen and therefore is not feasible or desirable for everybody. A gender influence is visible here too, with male run-commuters more likely to run-commute twice in a day (Figure 5.8).

However, most run-commuters only commute one way in a day, with 67.6% doing so (Figure 5.8). There are three different configurations of how run-commuters

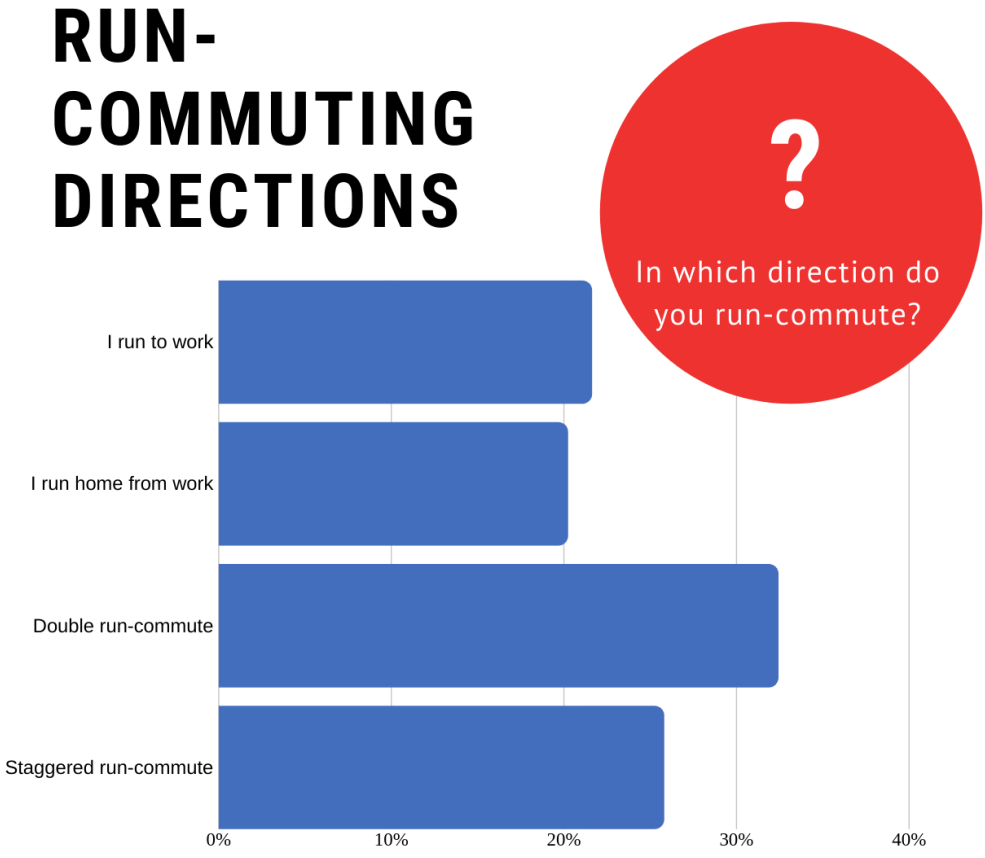
undertook their one-way run-commutes, and various reasons for choosing so. The marginally least popular was to only run home from work (Figure 5.8) and this is a common option for run-commuters who lack workplace facilities to enable an outbound run-commute as discussed in Chapter 8. They overcome this constraint by only run-commuting the return leg, where all the facilities they require are at home. Running to work was slightly more popular (Figure 5.8) suggesting that most of these run-commuters have the facilities they require at work to do so. A morning run-commute also drew plaudits from run-commuters for maximising the time-efficiency of the practice as no time in the evening is given over to running, and because of the mental benefits they gained from running (see Chapters 7 and 8 for further discussion of this). The third, and most popular, composition of one-way run-commuting is a staggered affair, running both to and from work but on consecutive days. Just over a quarter of run-commuters do this (Figure 5.8), and generally run home one day and the run to work the following day. Other transport modes are used to undertaken the other journey in a complex of commuting practices. This is an effective option for run-commuters who do not wish to run-commute twice in a day but whose other transport practices do not permit always run-commuting the same direction. For those who commute by a private transport mode when not running, notably a personal car or bicycle, ensuring this transport is available to complete the other commuting journeys necessitates this staggering, as explained by Carl:

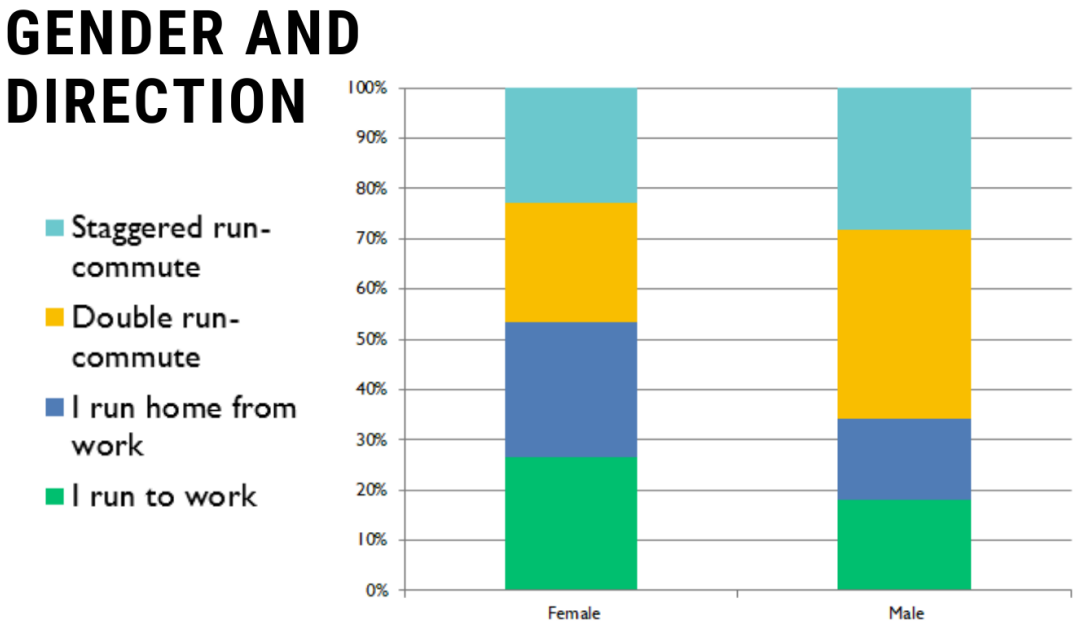
> **Carl:** I cycle in on the morning, I'll run back in the evening, so my bike's here, so I need to run back in on Tuesday morning.

Thus, these run-commuters alternate commuting by running and by other modes. Those who commute by public transport when not running do not face the same issues.

Observing the directional configurations of run-commuting journeys highlights once again, the important role workplaces have in enabling run-commuting, as well as the logistical considerations necessary in accomplishing run-commuting, as explored in Chapters 7 and 8. In this instance, the logistics concern the congruousness and synchronicity of different transport modes run-commuters may use within their weekly repertoire. One reason a double run-commute may be the most popular configuration of run-commuting is that its eliminates the need to synchronise different transport modes. If workplace facilities exist to enable running to work and from work in a single day, then run-commuting becomes a self-contained

Figure 5.8 Run-commuting directions





commuting mode rather than one that needs to exist in conjunction with others. The role of workplaces and relationships with other transport modes in producing run-commuting practices are vital will be explored further throughout the thesis.

Run-commuting durations and distances

The frequency and direction of run-commuting act as parameters as to what is possible to run due to the physical nature of run-commuting. Simply, there is only so far and so often people can or will want to run. This makes it very interesting to explore the duration that people run-commute for. It should be noted, and is discussed explicitly in the next section, that not all run-commuters run the entirety of their commute. For about 27%, running is a stage in a multi-modal commute. The durations discussed here reflect purely the running element of a run-commute. Observing the durations run-commuters run for on their commutes (Figure 5.9) demonstrates that for most their travel time is being increased by run-commuting. The modal and median time band that run-commuters spend running on the commute is 40 – 49 minutes, higher than the 38 minutes reported by Strava (2017b), whereas in most areas of the UK, the average travel time to work is under half an hour (Department for Transport, 2017c). In London, however, the average travel time to work is 46 minutes (Department for Transport, 2017c), suggesting potentially no increases in travel time for London run-commuters. This may help to explain why London is such a hotspot as it offers potentially heightened time-savings and efficiencies. However, these savings are also dependent on the mode of transport practitioners are swapping from. The average cycling commute duration in the UK, which is the most common other form of transport for run-commuters (see Chapter 6), is just over 20 minutes, whereas the average rail commute, which is the second most common other transport mode, is almost an hour (Department for Transport, 2017c). Thus for some practitioners, run-commuting represents a quicker commute whereas for others it increases the duration of a commute, and is certainly slower than alternative active commuting modes. While traditional transport rationales and imperatives of travel-time savings (Mackie et al, 2001; Metz, 2008) can make sense of opting to run-commute if it makes commuting quicker, they struggle more to explain any increases. Under this school of thought, decreasing travel time is the highest priority. Again, it proves instructive here to consider temporal rationalities over a wider timeframe than a single journey as well

as to contemplate the possible productiveness of travel-time on wider scale. Under this logic, increases in travel-time caused by run-commuting can seem rational. Constructing a rational or utility narrative, such as this, is an often-necessary step in engaging conversations and prompting interventions within transport policy and professions (see Aldred, 2015).

Although averages are useful in providing a general picture, they can mask a wide range of actualities. Analysing the durations of run-commutes, the average falls between 40 – 49 minutes but a very large range is apparent. The bulk of run-commuting durations fall between 30 and 79 minutes, just over 70% of run-commuters reported this. Above and below these there are rapid drop offs (Figure 5.9). Only a few practitioners reported to run for more than 80 minutes, which represents a much longer than average commute duration, and a similar number ran for less than 20 minutes. This once more indicates that there are both upper and lower desired durations, above which may exceed physical abilities or interest and below which may not be worthwhile running. By worthwhile, I mean achieving the desired outcomes of a run, whether that be an experiential outcome (see Chapter 10) or a metricised one in terms of distance covered, physical exertion, calories burnt or any other metric runners use to measure a run's worth. In essence, there are both maximum and minimum thresholds in run-commuting feasibility.

There appear to be several factors implicit in determining the duration of a commute spent running. While distance to work may be the largest influence, setting out the spatial parameters, there are other factors at play here too. As seen in Figure 5.9, the frequency of run-commuting affects durational feasibilities, with those run-commuting more regularly generally running for less time. Similarly, those who do a double run-commute are notably more likely to run for less time than those who only commute one way (Figure 5.9). Gender also has a notable impact here. On average, female run-commuters run for a longer duration, with a modal time band of 50 – 59 minutes compared to 40 – 49 minutes for male run-commuters (Figure 5.9). Female run-commuters' running durations are less spread than male run-commuters however. There is a great concentration of durations for female run-commuters within the 30 – 79 minute bracket then there are for male run-commuters, who conversely report higher rates of shorter and longer durations (Figure 5.9). These shorter durations could be linked to the higher frequency discussed above. These trends match wider running patterns, with Strava (2018)

reporting that the average duration per run for UK runners was 34:45 for women and 33:51 for men. This indicates not only that women tend to run for longer than men, but that both genders run-commute for longer durations than an average run. This suggests that either run-commuters are undertaking their longer runs on the commute, that running on the commute is slower, and/or that run-commuting is encouraging increased activity levels.

Within any discussion of duration it is also essential to consider distance. Total commuting distance has already been presented but here we are paying attention directly on the running distance of any run-commute journey. While Strava (2018) report a median run-commuting distance of 3.72 miles (6 km) in the UK, respondents to my survey suggest it is further than this, with the modal and median distance being 5 – 6.99 miles (Figure 5.9). Once more, there is an identifiable core of distances being ran on the commute, with 63.42% of run-commute measuring between 3 – 6.99 miles, and over three quarters measuring between 3 – 8.99 miles. Although one run-commuter reported a run-commute of above 15 miles, distances above nine miles were quite rare, as indeed were particularly short distances. This is for the same reasons deliberated above for the duration distribution and yet, despite the upper limits to run-commute distances, the average length of a run-commute is above the average distance of all runs, reported to be 4.7 miles (7.6 km) (Strava, 2018). Once more suggesting that the run-commute is being used to perform longer runs or promoting increased exercise.

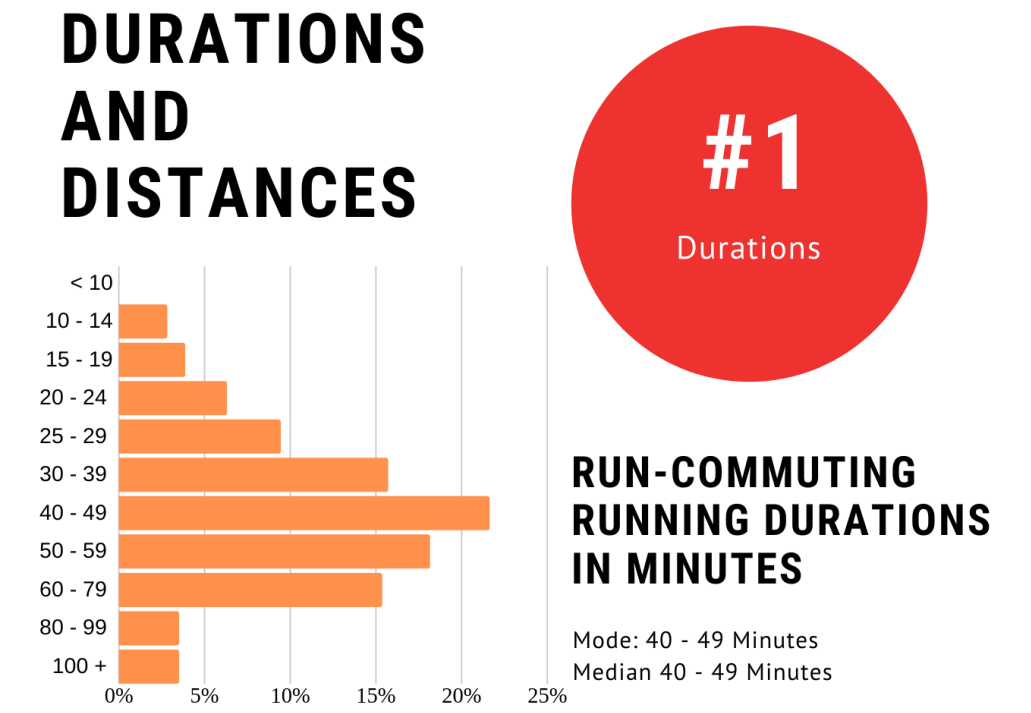
While run-commuting frequencies and direction, once again, play their role in producing different commuting distances (Figure 5.9), the gendered nature of distances is a little more curious. In direct opposition to duration, here female run-commuters report averagely shorter run-commuting distances than male run-commuters. The modal distance bracket for women was 3 – 4.99 miles and their median fell on the boundary between 3 – 4.99 miles and 5 – 6.99 miles, whereas both the mode and median for male run-commuting distances was firmly in the 5 – 6.99 miles bracket (Figure 5.9). Similar to duration however, there is less variety in women's distances whereas male run-commuters tend to have a more diverse range, particularly in the longer distances. There is a situation then, where women perform longer durations but shorter distances than male run-commuters. Speed, is the missing link in this equation. Unlike other transport modes, speed within run-commuting will be a highly individual attribute dependent on many variables. On average however, women appear to run at slower speeds on their commute, a

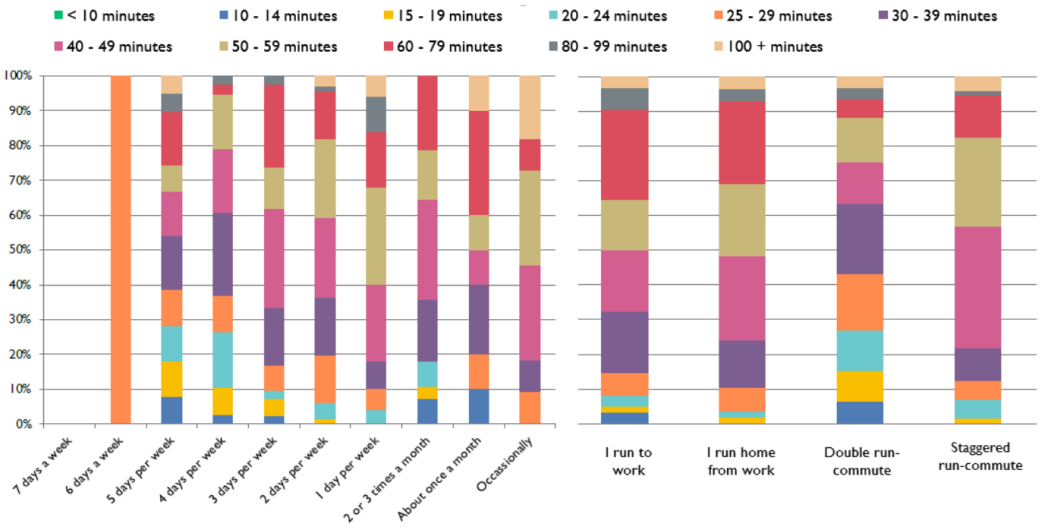
trend mirroring wider patterns in running (Strava, 2018). Interestingly though, the average pace on a run-commute reported by Strava (2017b) is quicker than the average pace for all runs (Strava, 2018). This may suggest that run-commuters are generally quicker runners, that practitioners opt to run at a quicker pace on a run-commute, and/or that the taking place of a run-commute encourages quicker paces. These ideas will be interrogated later, in Chapter 9.

The fact that people run at different paces and have different levels of fitness is essential in regulating what brute facts are a plausible for their run-commuting practice. This is likely to be individually determined - what is possible or desirable for one many not be possible or desirable for another. Therefore understanding ideal run-commuting distances becomes intriguing, even more so considering the notions of upper and lower thresholds hinted at throughout this chapter. In essence, this is the theory of run-commuting. What, hypothetically are the shortest, longest and ideal distances run-commuters would think are worthwhile/plausible to run on the commute. As seen in Figure 5.9, the mean shortest distance was 3 miles. Below this, most run-commuters felt the logistical effort involved in accomplishing run-commuting was not worth the reward of such a short run. The maximum distance was 9.85 miles, above which most people felt was too far to consider run-commuting regularly. The ideal run-commuting distance, however, was just over 6 miles, roughly what the average run-commute already is. This suggests that most run-commuters are happy with the distance they run and provides an indication of what distance is generally deemed feasible for those considering taking up run-commuting, should the practice continue to grow. With the average commuting distance in the UK standing at 8.8 miles (Department for Transport, 2017b), this could be viable for a large percentage of UK commuters.

Exploring the duration and distances of UK run-commuters has permitted insights into what brute facts of movement are plausible within the practice. While much variety exists, pertaining to individual's fitness and desirability, a clear common core is visible within which most running stages of a run-commute lie. On average, run-commuters run a distance of 5 – 6.99 miles in an average duration of 40 – 49 minutes. Run-commuting frequencies and directions were influential in producing such brute facts here, as was gender. Overall, women ran for a longer duration but men ran a further distance, indicating the important role pace plays in run-commuting practices. In general, these averages represent an increase in travel time for run-commuters, challenging the imperatives of travel-time savings in transport

Figure 5.9 Run-commuting durations and distances

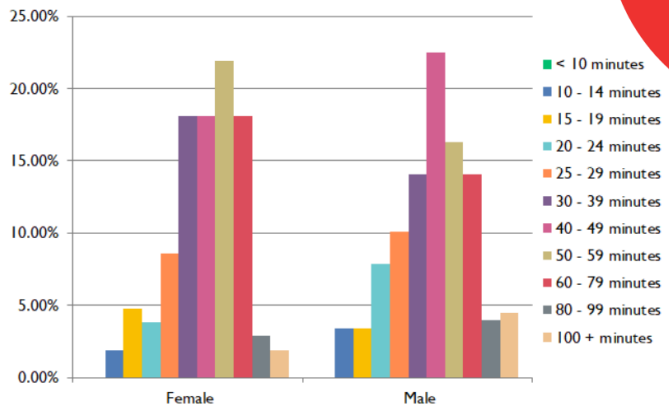




DISTANCES AND DURATIONS

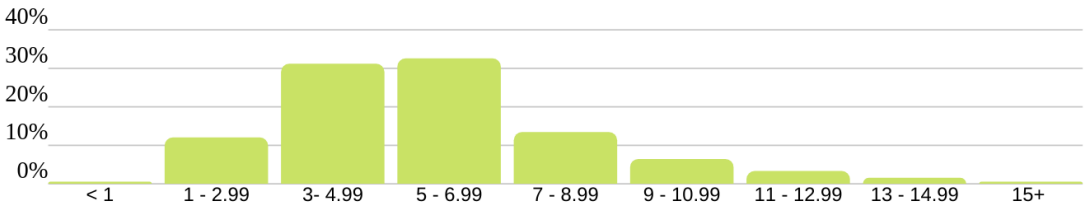
#2

Gendered durations and distances



RUN-COMMUTING DURATIONS BY GENDER

DISTANCES RAN ON THE RUN-COMMUTE IN MILES



AVERAGE DISTANCE DESIRES

3 MILES

Minimum run-commute distance

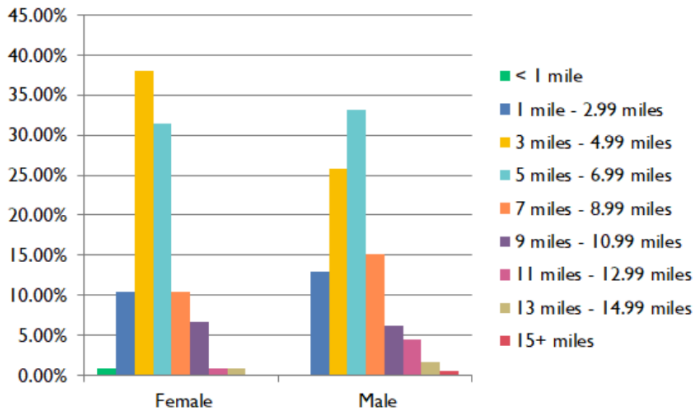
Maximum run-commute distance

9.85 MILES

6 MILES

Ideal run-commute distance

DISTANCES RAN BY GENDER



practices, as well as longer runs, suggesting that run-commuting may be encouraging increased activity levels. Throughout this examination, there were not just limits to the length of run-commuting distances/duration but also on their brevity. There exists both an upper and lower limit to run-commuting distances/duration, above which is too much and below which not worthwhile. Speaking theoretically, run-commuters suggested these fell around 10 and 3 miles respectively, with an ideal run-commute distance of 6 miles being suggested. These figures are important in grasping the potential of run-commuting, indicating who may fall within run-commuting's plausible spatio-temporalities.

Multi-modalities

As suggested in the above section, not all run-commuters run the entirety of their commute with the running durations and distances reported just, forming part of their total commute journeys. For most run-commuters, run-commuting is a single mode affair as presented in Figure 5.10. However, for 27.18% of run-commuters, their journeys involve the combining of multiple transport modes. Multi-modal journeys have historically been underrepresented in travel surveys and large datasets as journeys are logged according to the dominant mode (Clifton and Muhs, 2012). However, it is a topic gaining wider attention within transport studies and practice, with increasing consideration on 'the last mile' and 'door to door' connectivity for example (Krygsman and Dijst, 2001; Brons and Rietveld, 2009; Buehler and Hamre, 2015; Tilahun et al, 2016; Yap et al, 2016). Multi-modality has been shown to be an integral element not only in the actuation and taking place of mobility but also in transport choices, mobility design, transport provision, traveller satisfaction and health outcomes among others (Clifton and Muhs, 2012; Mao et al, 2016; Jensen, 2014). It is also an archetypal complex of practices, with multiple transport practices reliant on each other for sequencing and synchronicity. Therefore, the multi-modality of run-commuting requires attention to understand the impact it has on the production and potential of the practice (also see Part Three).

For those run-commuters who undertake multi-modal journeys, they are most commonly running under half of the total distance using another form of transport for the majority, which is the case for almost 15% of run-commuters (Figure 5.10).

A much smaller percentage runs over half of the total distance whereas an intriguing cohort of run-commuters claim to mix it up. This further evidences the flexibility of run-commuting, in that different distances can be run depending on the needs of the run-commuter. Following transport routes and infrastructure can aid in mixing it up, as this respondents explained:

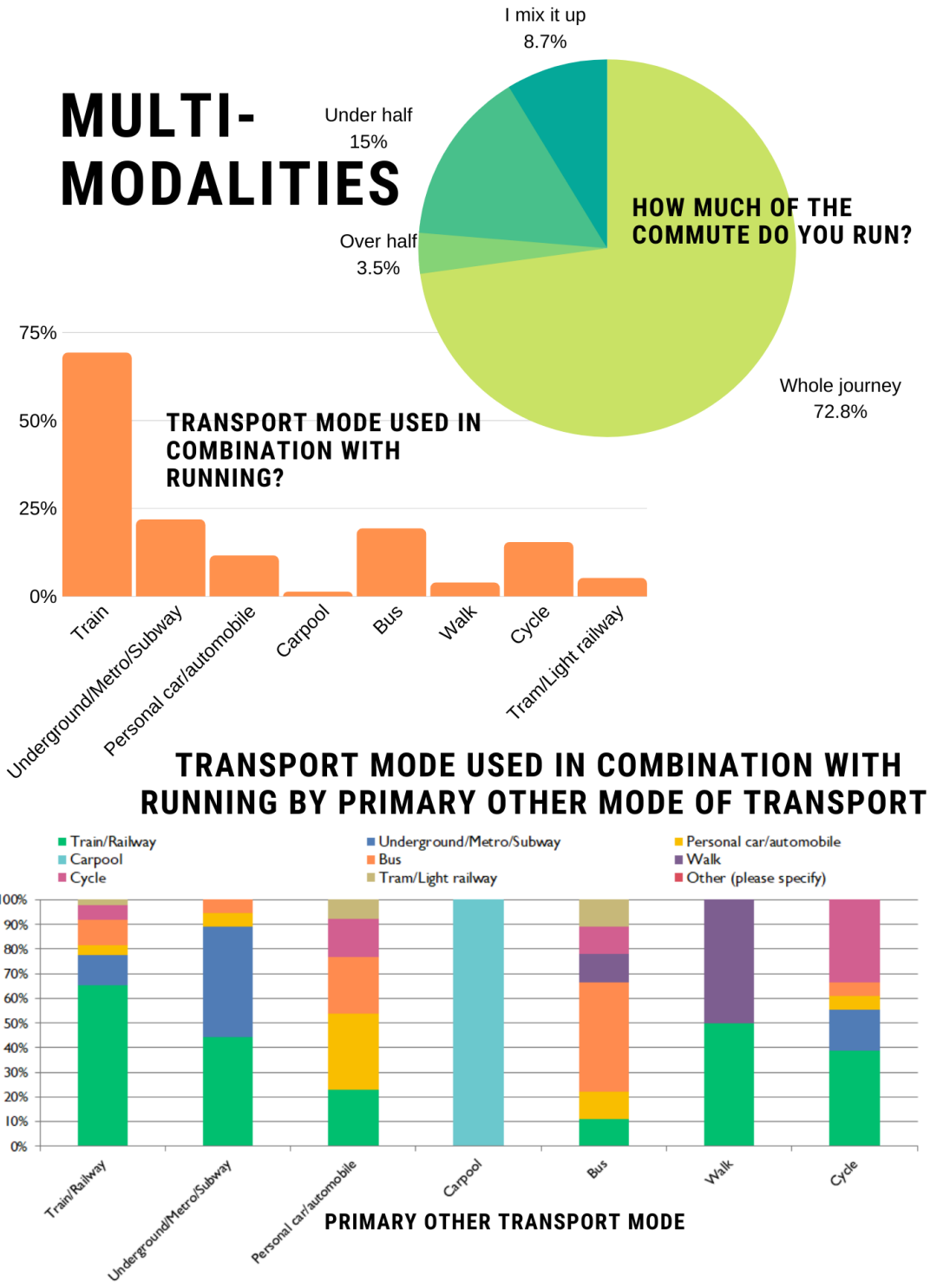
> **Survey respondent #188 (Female 18-24):** Get off at different train stops each time for different distance runs.

The interdependence and complexity between these run-commuting practices and the practices of transport provision are clear here. Well-established and convenient public transport systems seem integral to performing this type of run-commuting, and therefore, may be another factor determining the geographies of run-commuting shown. London would be a case in point.

If undertaking a multi-stage commute involving run-commuting, the train appears to be the easiest, or at least most popular, transport mode to combine running with (Figure 5.10). Almost 70% of multi-modal run-commuters also use the train as part of their commuting journeys. Railway stations often deliver passengers to strategic locations within a city, but it is rarely a door-to-door service, thus commuters are left with distance to cover to get to work/home. This is where the emphasis on the last mile in transport research has stemmed from. For run-commuters, covering this distance by running is a suitable solution. Overall, public transport seems more amenable to combine with running, with Underground and bus services proving the next most popular modes (Figure 5.10). Personal transport modes did not feature as heavily, in particular cycling featured as part of run-commuting journeys much less than its prominence as the most common other mode of transport for run-commuters (see Chapter 6) may presume. This said, it is fairly frequent for part-way run-commuters to move away from their primary mode of transport for the other stages of their multi-modal run-commute (Figure 5.10). In particular, those who normally actively commute when not run-commuting are more than likely to utilise a different transport mode, placing extra pressure on these systems. Therefore, cities with well-established public transport are likely to encourage run-commuting in various ways.

These findings place emphasis on public transport infrastructure, and particularly train stations, as sites of intersection between run-commuting and the other modes used in a multi-modal commute. The multiple transport practices form complexes

Figure 5.10 Multi-modalities



in enabling run-commuting but also offer a confluence of elements that may conflict with run-commuting. Many run-commuters are not just run-commuters. They are also train-travellers, bus patrons and Tube passengers. As such, they undertake their commute as an assemblage tailored to, or at least compromised for, these multi-modalities. For example, run-commuters are likely to have materials and accoutrements for the "art and craft of train travel" (Watts, 2008: p.711) with them as well as what they need for their running and working day. How these intersections take place in run-commuting is not just a question of infrastructural provision (though important), it is also a question of atmospheres, experiences, elements, and encounters. These themes are examined at more length in Part Three.

Run-commuting and running

Throughout this thesis, run-commuting is characterised as a practice positioned between the practices of running and commuting. While the above section focussed more squarely on the transport elements on the practice, what has become clear during this overview of run-commuting is the greater concern most practitioners have with the running aspect of the practice. It would appear that running may be the core of the practice and commuting is the pragmatism of it. Therefore, this section seeks to illuminate these links between run-commuting and running in a little more depth. As seen in Figure 5.11, run-commuters are generally frequent and/or serious runners. Almost all run-commuters are doing some running outside of the run-commute (Figure 5.11). Two days a week is the most common here, but a high proportion of respondents run more frequently than this. Generally, run-commuters demonstrate a very high frequency of running. Considering that the average UK runner on Strava only uploads 32 runs a year (Strava, 2018), an average of 0.62 runs per week, run-commuters appear to be more serious in their running practices. This makes a lot of sense. Running infrequently is unlikely to present the same time pressures and infringements on other areas of life that motivate run-commuting. However there is great diversity in the sort of runners who run-commute. This is visible in the variety of running descriptors selected by respondents in Figure 5.11. Run-commuters are as likely to run for health, enjoyment and adventure, as they are competition. These nicely respond to the conceptual triumvirate of running as relating to the spheres of sport, health and

experience (Tanio, 2012). Run-commuting does not fit neatly into these categories, yet many respondents to the survey selected run-commuting as one of the labels to describe their running status. This implies run-commuting is central to their running practice. In these ways, while run-commuting is heavily couched within and is in a complex with wider running practices, it also questions what running is and what it means to be a runner – presenting an alternative manifestation that challenges dominant discourses of running. In short, run-commuting is beginning to change running.

Yet, it is changing running for a very specific groups of runners. Just over 50% of run-commuters are a part of a running club (Figure 5.11). Generally, running club membership indicates a greater commitment to running, approaching it with a greater level of seriousness that manifests in increased running levels and proves very influential to the social worlds of runners (Shipway et al, 2013; Richardson et al, 2014), more so than non-club runners (Hitchings and Latham, 2017). The rate of club membership within the run-commuting population is very high. More widely, of those who run at least once a month, only 5% are members of a running club (Sport England, 2012). This ten-fold increase in club membership evident in run-commuting is likely to impact not only the levels of running, and thus the time-pressures motivating run-commuting, but may also play a part in the diffusion of run-commuting awareness and participation. Simply, being part of a running club makes you more likely to know other run-commuters and experience the time-pressures and incongruities of high running levels, and therefore, potentially more likely to consider run-commuting. There are forms of social capital involved in running club membership and communities (see Wiltshire and Stevinson, 2018; Larsen and Bærenholdt, 2019) that here are being exchanged to mobilise and normalise run-commuting as a resource (after Bourdieu, 1986; Putnam, 1993). In this way, running clubs may be nodes within the rise of run-commuting, acting as hotbeds to proliferate the cognizance and need for run-commuting.

The connections between run-commuting and running practices are multiple, intense and deeply enmeshed. They are key for understanding the production of run-commuting as a complex of practices. For most practitioners, running is certainly the driving and orchestrating force with run-commuting generally being a tool for managing the time demands of this. Although this is not the case for all, some are motivated to run-commute for other reasons (as discussed in Chapter 6), it is overwhelmingly so. Yet it must be noted that when discussing the running and

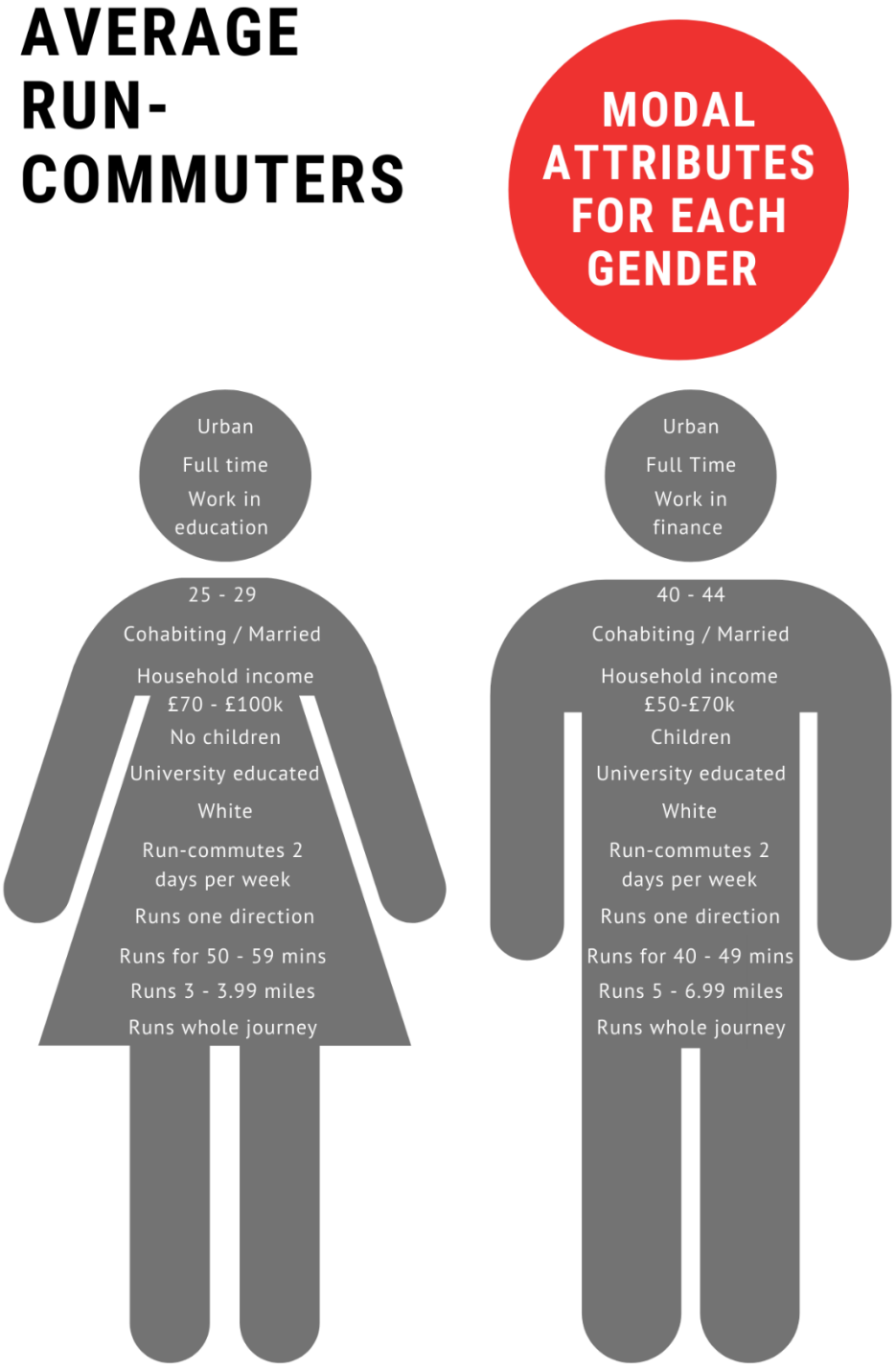
Figure 5.11 Run-commuting and running

runners of run-commuting, we are not necessarily talking about the 'average runner'. Run-commuters are generally more serious runners who demonstrate different brute facts of movement to runners more widely. While this is vital to understand and may hint towards restrictions on the future growth of run-commuting, it is important not to overstate this. Almost 50% of run-commuters are not part of a club and many do not run with such intensity. Therefore, the challenges run-commuting poses to running do have wider resonance and are beginning to make changes within the wider practice of running not just within particular practitioners.

Conclusion

A lot of ground has been covered in this chapter. In seeking to critically present the brute facts of run-commuting, an exploration of the geographies, populations, demographics, journeys and running of run-commuting has taken place. Doing so has revealed some key enabling and constraining factors related to these spheres and the social differentiation inherent within and caused by them. Run-commuting is a racialised, gendered and classed practice with it being most popular with urban-dwelling middle-aged white men in highly paid professional jobs. There are relatively high numbers of female run-commuters however but gendered differences still punctuate many of the brute facts of run-commuting. This is exemplified in Figure 5.12, which profiles the 'average' male and female run-commuter in the UK. The various ways the elements interrogated in this chapter enable and constrain run-commuting practices have been a central concern. This revealed a deep entwining of numerous other practices within run-commuting and the multiple ways they can enable or limit it. Of particular significance were the wider practices of running, work, home, and commuting that entangle in bundles and complexes to produce run-commuting. These bundling practices function to enable run-commuting by creating the conditions where run-commuting and its spatial-temporal efficiency is required, and by providing facilities that helped run-commuting take place. However, should any of these practices fall out of sequence or synchronicity, they could function to constrain run-commuting, making it more difficult to undertake. These ideas are deliberated further in Part Three, but the last chapter of this Part profiling run-commuting explores the motivations and catalysts of run-commuting practices, where such bundling becomes significant once more.

Figure 5.12 The average run-commuters



Chapter 6

Run-commuting motivations and catalysts

This chapter forms the final piece of the profile of run-commuting I am stitching together in this Part. Having explored the recent developments in run-commuting practices, whether run-commuting is a thing or not, as well as what its brute facts are, this chapter takes aim at why people do it. Why are people increasingly opting to lace up their trainers and run the distance between work and home when other, pre-established and most likely easier options are available to them? The reasons why people take up run-commuting are explored in two ways within this chapter. Firstly, I discuss the motivations, reasons and rationales of run-commuting. Doing so unpacks some of the meanings held about run-commuting, which are constitutive elements in the production of mobilities (Cresswell, 2006) and in establishing practice-as-entities (Shove et el, 2012). Secondly, I ask what actually converts such motivation into action and what sparks the commencements of run-commuting through an exploration of run-commuting catalysts. These reveal a wide-range of factors that can incentivise and stimulate the uptake of run-commuting practices, further signifying the embeddedness and entangling of run-commuting in everyday life. The last section of this chapter turns brief attention to what these motivations may mean for the stability and sustainability of run-commuters' practices, speaking to the future of run-commuting and its prospects as a practice.

Motivations

Various factors emerged from the research that explain why people choose to run-commute. These differ between individuals and within any individual these factors are multiple and simultaneous. Interestingly, there were no notable patterns relating to age, gender or other social categories found in relation to motivations, suggesting that the factors underpinning them may be felt equally between different people. Although the incentives for run-commuting are numerous (see Figure 6.1), this section will examine the most prominent motivations for run-commuting and discuss their relationship to other practices entangled within run-commuting.

Figure 6.1 Survey respondents' motivations for run-commuting

Time

I contend that the primary motivation for run-commuting is time. Time-efficiency and time-management feature very prominently among the reasons survey respondents selected for their uptake of run-commuting (Figure 6.1) and was commonly discussed by run-commuters interviewed for this project. This may require some explanation. I have continuously suggested that run-commuting is a practice caught between those of running and commuting but am now advocating time as the prime motivation behind it. However, it is not a desire to run or a desire to commute that is driving the rise of run-commuting, it is a desire to find the time to do these (running primarily). The question at the heart of understanding run-commuters' motivations then, is not why run or why commute but rather why run on the commute. Time is often the keystone to understanding this and ultimately boils down to run-commuters generally finding the commute a temporally feasible or effective way of fitting running into their lives.

This was generally talked about by run-commuters in two ways. Firstly, run-commuting was positioned as a way of finding time for running, as these participants explained:

> **Callum:** It's changed a bit since I've had children because I just don't have the time. Apart from ill-advised marathon training last year, I don't have the time to do hours and hours a week. So at the moment I'm just running home, really, and occasionally I'll do something else. It's changed especially since the new baby actually … So before then I'd go out [for a run] at weekend, but it's quite hard to look after two of them by yourself for any length of time, so I just don't at the moment … [In the week] having to get our daughter to bed at— She's a late sleeper so half past 8. Then eat dinner, then go running. It was just completely unworkable. So sometimes it's just the only way I can run. At the moment it just gets me out the door, I think, which is good. If I wasn't run-commuting, I don't know how much I'd be running at all.
>
> **Richard:** It's just the time commitment, the fact that I'm getting up at 6 o'clock every morning, not getting home till quarter to 8. If I was to then go out [for a run], it would just be so late. I wouldn't have time to do— I

> barely have time to eat tea. I don't think I could bring myself to do it to be honest.

Here we get the sense that without run-commuting, these run-commuters would struggle to find time to run alongside all the other demands, duties and practices of daily life. Shove et al's (2012) articulation of how practices bundle together offer a useful way of thinking about the time deficiencies run-commuters speak about. They argue that while often felt as a personal temporal affliction, the time squeezes and pressures people experience (Southerton, 2003) are actually problems with managing and organising the set of practices they are carrying, along with their various temporal demands and engagements (Southerton, 2006). Rather than an issue of time *per se*, the issues actually lie in sequencing, coordinating, scheduling and synchronising practices, and it is these junctures that are being squeezed. In the above quotes, we see how some participants in this study were struggling to coordinate running practices alongside those of parenting, work, eating, sleeping and the many others they need to sequence. Through this framing, the spatial and temporal rhythms of everyday life orchestrates "how some practices flourish and others fade; how qualities of frequency, duration and sequence emerge; [and] how practices integrate to form bundles and complexes (Shove et al, 2012: p.96). This has resonance to Hägerstrand's (1970) time-geography and his interest how people negotiate space and time in the weaving together of their daily activities. We can see such influences apparent within practitioners' motivations to run-commute above. As rhythms of everyday life become more complex and practices squeezed (Southerton, 2003; Cass and Faulconbridge, 2016), some have experienced a fading of their own running practices as it becomes more difficult to sequence, which subsequently leads to a flourishing of run-commuting practices as an alternative way of scheduling their running desires. Travel is often spatio-temporally bundled as a means to accomplish various activities (Watson, 2012) but in run-commuting we see the means of travel changing in order to become the accomplishment in itself, in what can be seen as an integration of commuting and running practices into a complex.

Run-commuting is not always a reactive solution however. It is not always the case that a fading of running practices prompted the uptake of run-commuting. Some participants in this study spoke of run-commuting as a sort of preventative measure, recognising that their current organisation of everyday practices may lead to such a squeezing, which would result in the diminishing of one or more of these practices.

Rather than finding time, this was often reported by run-commuters as a quest for time-efficiency, seeking more satisfying ways of synchronising their set of practices to prevent such squeezing and its possible outcomes:

> **Dominic:** I do it because it allows me to get the quantity of running in that I need without impacting other time constraints that I've got in my life .. [Previously] the marathon training, the volume of it, did eat into the time my wife and I would have otherwise used for other things.

> **Malcolm:** [Run-commuting] is just a way of getting some running in, in a way that doesn't hugely interfere with family life. From my run-commuting, I can get an hour of running done in a day and it doesn't mean I get home and say hi, bye and go out for a run which would be really annoying I think for my family.

The time-efficiencies that come from run-commuting derive from the complexing of two practices into one. Rather than needing to commute and run, they are possible to undertake simultaneously through run-commuting, which in turns eases the scheduling pressures on other practices. While this may be employed to ease pressures on particular practices as discussed in these quotes (also see Chapter 7 for more on how run-commuting helps home life), it may just be a quest for time-efficiency that can make room in the sequencing of everyday life for nothing in particular or unknown opportunities:

> **Holly:** I've been to a few running groups since I've been in London … I had to wait till I'd finished work to then travel somewhere to then run with people I didn't know to then get back somewhere that wasn't my house and then to commute home so - And it was like to run 5K or whatever. So I just thought, "I could leave work at 5, run a 5K and showered and everything by 6 o'clock whereas I haven't even started [at the running group]".

Finding time and time-efficiency are the two main ways participants in this project discussed their temporal motivations for run-commuting. This may initially be a little surprising as run-commuting generally results in longer travel durations than other transport modes, as seen in the last chapter, and therefore increasing the time demands of commuting. This is not even taking into consideration the additional time needed to prepare for run-commuting and to transition between work and run-commuting (discussed in Chapters 7 and 8). However, the temporal efficiency

run-commuters gain from their practice is not measured over the course of a single journey but rather in the effective sequencing of competing demands and rhythms over the course of a day or week. Opting to run to work may be a slower form of transport for most people, but the fact two things are being accomplished through one practice is where the time-efficiency lies. Run-commuters utilise incumbent moments of mobility in order to undertake their running and in doing so, end up finding time to run or freeing up time elsewhere in the day for other things. This presents both an effective time-management strategy and a rational transport choice for practitioners. Run-commuting is pragmatic running for time-poor runners.

Why the commute becomes the solution here is an interesting question to ask. Why is the commute deemed as free to be converted for running purposes over other activities, practices or moments that could equally provide time for running? There are a few reasons for this. The first relates to the regular and routine nature of the commute. This offers opportunities to develop running habits, rather than trying to utilise more *ad hoc* or infrequent events that may prove less successful in creating regular time for running. Running, particularly when in training for a race, can oblige large quantities of time and demand regular commitment (Smith, 2002; Allen-Collinson, 2003; Burlot et al, 2018; Edensor and Larsen, 2018; Barnfield, 2020). Commuting is one activity that is regular enough to serve as an alternative time-space in which to do such running. The common start and end locations also simplify the logistics of run-commuting (discussed in Chapter 8), providing base sites where facilities can be known, used and tailored to improve the ease of run-commuting. This allows for habits of logistics, as well as running, to be developed. The mandatory nature of commuting also proves motivational for some. Some participants explained they are more likely to do a run on the commute than they are a run elsewhere in the day:

> **Harriet:** This is a way of running that makes me more likely to run more times in a week and more likely to run further. So, it helps with me running and me running makes me happier in life. If I [commute] home [normally], the likelihood was I wouldn't get back out again [for a run] ... you've got a massive battle of willpower of getting through the door and you just want to like cook some dinner or have a chat or call a friend and make some dinner and watch Netflix or whatever. Actually dispensing with that willpower issue just by running home just felt like a really, really good way.

Run-commuting here helps to sustain the practice of running more so than perhaps just having an ordinary running practice may. In some ways, run-commuting is motivating running for some people, rather than the desires for running motivating run-commuting, as may be the more common alignment.

For some run-commuters, the routine and mandatory nature of commuting has also proved more successful in sustaining and sequencing their running than other attempts to find alternative time. As reported by Barnfield (2020), run-commuting is one of a number of solutions runners adopt when faced with such time pressures, including running at lunchtime. This was discussed as something trialled (unsuccessfully) by some participants in this study:

> **Carl:** [I used to run on] Friday lunchtime but, completely time ineffective. Very hard to portion out time, either in the job that I do or just the way that I actually want to work. Really hard to sort of close the laptop at midday, be like, "No meetings. I'm going off. I'm disappearing. I'll be back in a bit," and then changing, running, changing back, lunch, then trying to get back into work again. Didn't really work.

However, it is more than just the rhythm of commuting that is encouraging its increasing use as a time-space for running. Many of the arguments made around run-commuting concerns perceptions of commuting and travel time. This has been a well-discussed issue within academia recently (Jain and Lyons, 2008; Lin, 2012) and two poles of travel time have been identified. On one side is the idea that travel time is something that holds no intrinsic value and should sought to be reduced wherever possible. In their critical assessment of this notion, Lyons and Urry (2005: p.262) noted that "at the time of writing, travel time in the UK is presumed, in economic terms at least, to be wasted, unproductive time". On the other side, is the idea that travel time is actually a gift, something that has intrinsic value and can be used productively and/or enjoyably in a variety of ways. In this regard, Jain and Lyons (2008: p.88) contend that "travel time is a desirable time for many people in many instances, and is actively incorporated into the organi[s]ation of everyday activities and work-related tasks". This is certainly visible in run-commuting. Indeed, the rise of run-commuting perhaps demonstrates both of these points of view at the same time. The fact that commuting is being converted into running could suggest that run-commuters did not value in their previous commutes, or at least did not value it as highly as they do running. If run-commuters did, then the time-saving and practice-sequencing benefits of run-commuting would be lessened as

alternative time may need to be found to do the activities they usually do on the commute. At the same time, however, recognising that commuting time can be used for running, is recognising the gift and value that travel time can have. The perceptions of commuting and travel time play an important role in the rise of run-commuting and will be returned in more depth in Chapter 7.

This section demonstrates how time acts as a key motivator for run-commuting practices. In both seeking time for running and time-efficiency in the sequencing of everyday life, run-commuting has begun to flourish as a practice as others struggle to bundle successfully. The integration of running and commuting practices into a complex, not only halts the fading of some people's running practices (or others that may make way for running) but can actively function to motivate more running to occur. These temporal imperatives also suggest that the perceptions run-commuters may hold about travel time more widely are generally negative, seeing it as a waste of time and therefore available for converting into time for running. The importance of time, time-management and time-efficiency within run-commuting, and the regularity with which is it discussed establishes this as an integral element of the practice. I would argue that time-efficiency is a central meaning of run-commuting, something not so apparent in wider running practices, and as such helps to distinguish run-commuting as its own practice. Something reproduced and reinforced in each moment of doing undertaken for time-efficiency.

Running motivations

This said many run-commuters do not necessarily feel as though time-management is the core of their practice. For many practitioners, it is the influences necessitating the time-efficiency of run-commuting, those practices whose junctures are being squeezed, that are more central in motivating run-commuting. A desire to run is by far the most significant motivation here. While I would argue that motivations to run do not fully explain why this then takes place on the commute, and thus time is the principal motivation, it can be difficult to untangle run-commuting from running motivations. Running is undoubtedly a key motivator for run-commuting. Without motivation to run, run-commuting would never occur. However, as the motivations underpinning running practices are well-versed (see Ogles and Masters, 2003; Besomi et al, 2016; Roebuck et al, 2018; Ronkainen et al, 2018b; Stragier et

al, 2018) and do not necessarily answer why run on the commute specifically, I will introduce these more briefly.

In terms of running-related driving forces, running's function as a health and sport practice dominates the motivations to run-commute here. For those who see running as predominately a sporting endeavour, the opportunity to "get the miles in" (survey respondent #264, female, 25-29) is the key driver, finding time to undertake training in the hopes of sporting success. The wider health benefits of running, however, were some of the most highly selected reasons for run-commuting by respondents to the survey (Figure 6.1). Here, run-commuters value the run-commute as 'it is healthy', 'it is good for my mental wellbeing', and 'it is energising', which are explored further in Chapter 7. Such health motivations are generally marginalised in transport choices where time, money, convenience and reliability are often prioritised, even in considerations of other active modes (Jones and Ogilvie, 2012; Simons et al, 2014; Aldred, 2015). These transport-related reasons did not feature as highly within participants' motivations for run-commuting (Figure 6.1), suggesting that run-commuting is more closely entangled with practices of running than it is commuting.

However, the motivations for run-commuting are not purely a utilitarian affair. Despite the above discussions of time-efficiency and the enablement of sport and health benefits, there is much which motivates run-commuting that is less practical and productive - directly at least. An often overlooked but significant dimension in health/sport practices is pleasure (Phoenix and Orr, 2014; Humberstone and Stuart, 2016). For run-commuters, fun and enjoyment featured relatively highly among their motivations, as did the opportunity to explore their surroundings (Figure 6.1), which are pleasures further explored in Chapter 10. Simply, run-commuters like run-commuting and this preferable experience can motivate the uptake of the practice, a deficit of time is not necessarily required. These elements speak more broadly to the experiential dimensions of mobility, an important but often overlooked element in understanding commuting practices and patterns (Mokhtarian et al, 2001; Mokhtarian, 2005; Bissell, 2018). Run-commuting is a deeply embodied practice however, and matters of experience help to produce the practice. Experience motivates, in terms of enjoyment and fun but also in terms of the physical effort extolled which acts as a feedback mechanism in fulfilling any sporting/health goals being targeted through run-commuting. These themes are picked up more extensively in Chapter 10, but in relation to motivation, it is suffice

to say that the experiential nature of running is central in incentivising both the commencement and maintenance of run-commuting practices.

Experience also comes to define run-commuting as something apart from wider running or commuting practices too. To begin with, run-commuting may not offer the best running experiences. As discussed more in Chapters 9 and 10, the routine route, intensity of encounters and prosthetics of run-commuting are generally not conducive to an optimal running experience (also see Cregan-Reid, 2016, Ettma, 2016; Deelen et al, 2019). But in the same way that run-commuting may not feel precisely like ordinary running, importantly, it definitely does not feel like commuting. For many run-commuters, this is a major impetus for run-commuting. Indeed, a dislike of other transport modes featured relatively highly among run-commuters' motivations, with 15.25% of respondents ranking it as their most important reason (Figure 6.1) (something explored more in Chapter 7). In a similar vein to some respondents' dislike of the term run-commuting discussed in Chapter 4, many value the experience of run-commuting being dissimilar to their experiences of commuting more generally. Undoubtedly, this draws on the stereotypical perception of commuting as drudgery and a generally miserable experience (Bissell, 2018) but it proves important in the uptake and sustaining of run-commuting. Run-commuters may be compromising their running experience somewhat, but in return, they are totally transforming their commuting experience for the better. This is a trade that run-commuters deem worthwhile – the gains outweigh the losses.

The transformation of the commuting experience is so great in run-commuting that many practitioners struggle to see run-commuting as commuting. This, in turn, leads to another well-discussed benefit and motivation for run-commuting – that of a better work-life balance. While run-commuters achieve this in part by the more efficient sequencing of everyday practices, there is also a sense that they may also be converting their commute from an activity related to work to one related to life or personal time. Which of these realms commuting belongs is a debate still ongoing in academic and public discourse. In the UK, this is generally considered as employee's time rather than employers (Lyons et al, 2013) where travel time can be used for anti-activity and time out (Holley et al, 2008). However, increasing opportunities to undertaken productive "knowledge work" on the move, such as emails, has led to arguments that commuting can sit as part of a "work-related taskscape" and therefore, be construed as employer's time (Holley et al, 2008: p.27;

Coughlan, 2018). This difficulty in attributing ownership of commuting time is also reflected by some run-commuters who explained the way run-commuting almost circumvents this debate, conceiving it as something apart which provides some 'me' time:

> **Lisa:** So when I'm running, that's neither. That's somehow time I've managed to carve out that's mine. … This is kind of neither working nor home … So it's attained a different status. Whereas normal commuting is just shit. I don't know who it belongs to. It's just a pain in the arse.

> **Tyler:** [Commuting] is not my time. It doesn't feel like my time. That's an interesting one because I think… I feel if I'm running, it might be my time. I don't know. I think most of the time when I'm running it feels like my time because the days I chose to do run-commuting were days I was trying to go for a run anyway … But sitting on the bus, or rather, waiting for the bus, that doesn't feel like my time.

Both Lisa and Tyler reflect on the improvement of work-life balance many run-commuters speak about through the converting of commuting time to their time. This is jointly because of the way running feels compared to commuting, and because they are performing an activity that would usually be undertaken in their time. This rebalancing not only acts as a force to motivate and sustain run-commuting in its own right, but in turn, also helps amplify some of the mental and psychological benefits practitioners get from run-commuting (discussed more in Chapter 7). The double-whammy effect of positive benefits of running combined with reduced disbenefits of commuting (Lyons and Chatterjee, 2008; Bissell, 2014a; Clark et al, forthcoming) is also being harnessed by some run-commuters to further motivate running more generally. Finding the motivation to go for a run can be difficult (Cook et al, 2016a), yet, when faced with a less desirable alternative, like commuting, running can begin to appear more attractive. Combined with the sport and health benefits of run-commuting, these are the various running-related motivation that incentivise run-commuting.

Transport related

The above demonstrates how run-commuting and the motivation to do it is often realised in relation to other commuting options, in comparison to the memories, perceptions and experiences of them as modes of mobility. In such comparisons, run-commuters also find that running does have some more traditionally transport-related factors that serve as motivation to undertake the practice. For some, run-commuting is actually a better transport mode than alternatives. Much of this centres around convenience – a reason ranked relatively highly among run-commuters (Figure 6.1). Convenience is a reasonably broad term, so quite what survey respondents meant when selecting it is not known. However, the interviews with run-commuters suggest this may relate to a few different aspects. Firstly, for some run-commuters running actually represents a quicker mode of transport to their alternatives:

> **Oliver:** If I run direct, it's 6 and a half kilometres, which basically just goes straight over the hill … and that takes me about 35 minutes. I've done 32, but that's super quick. It is all the way downhill, which helps. But if I get the bus, the bus stop's just outside of my house, but it does the longest route to get around and it drops you off at Princes Street and then it's a 10-minute walk down the hill to my work. So there's no door-to-door bus service, if that makes sense … It'll probably take 45 minutes to an hour depending on the time of day that I'll leave and the traffic and what have you if I got the bus, so it's a no brainer to run.

This noted, it is not that common for running to be a quicker mode of transport. It is almost exclusively male run-commuters who find this, related to the quicker speeds they run. Something all run-commuters found in relation to running as a transport mode however, was a freedom to run-commuting that they enjoy:

> **Callum:** Big sense of freedom in being able to run-commute rather than having to rely on a car or the traffic or bus service or somewhere else. It's all completely in my control. I can go the way I want.

Here we can see that running as a transport mode is a more autonomous, flexible, and reliable than alternatives, something other run-commuters reflected upon:

> **Fiona:** I much prefer it when I can choose, so when I'm under my steam, because I know exactly how long it's going to take me. I know where I want to go. I don't have an aversion to the Tube, but it's never particularly pleasant, so I don't really want to do it. Buses, there isn't really a particular bus I can take from where I live now. Well, there is, but it's one of these ones that go to 70 places in between. So yeah, to be honest, running or cycling is the quickest and easiest way for me to get to work. So that's one of the reasons I do it. So I like being in control of it and under my own steam.

This demonstrates the autonomy, reliably and flexibility run-commuters find in running as a mode of transport, something also found in other active commuting modes, with many participants also advocating walking and cycling for similar reasons (something also more widely reported – see Jones and Ogilvie, 2012 for example). The importance of comparison in realising these benefits of motivation is also palpable in this quote too, how some of the more transport-centred motivations for run-commuting are borne in relation to the failure of other modes to offer such traits. This was vividly explained by Oliver:

> **Oliver:** I actually enjoy running past people who are in traffic. I just want to knock on their window going, "I'm running to work. I'm going to get there faster than you are" … I just have that urge just to like maybe run with a placard that says, "I'm running to work. Maybe you should too" or something like that.

In essence, although the transport elements of run-commuting are rarely principal motivators for practitioners, there are certainly beneficial traits of run-commuting that can contribute to the commencement or continuation of run-commuting practices. Run-commuting is not a transport mode bound by timetables, restricted to tracks and predetermined routes, and nor is it a transport mode prone to delay, congestion or breakdown. If opting to run-commute, departure times, arrival times and routes are (generally) of your choosing. It gifts run-commuters a flexibility they value. Should any of the rhythms they are harmonising through run-commuting demand a little more than anticipated, run-commuting is a transport mode that can respond to this. By offering practitioners a flexibility and autonomy within their commuting journeys, run-commuting has many benefits as a transport mode relating to convenience. In speaking about run-commuting in these terms, run-commuters also represented and reproduced the practice's meaning as a mode of transport,

something not typically associated with running mobilities. This represents another element of run-commuting that helps to distinguish it as a practice in its own right, something apart from wider running.

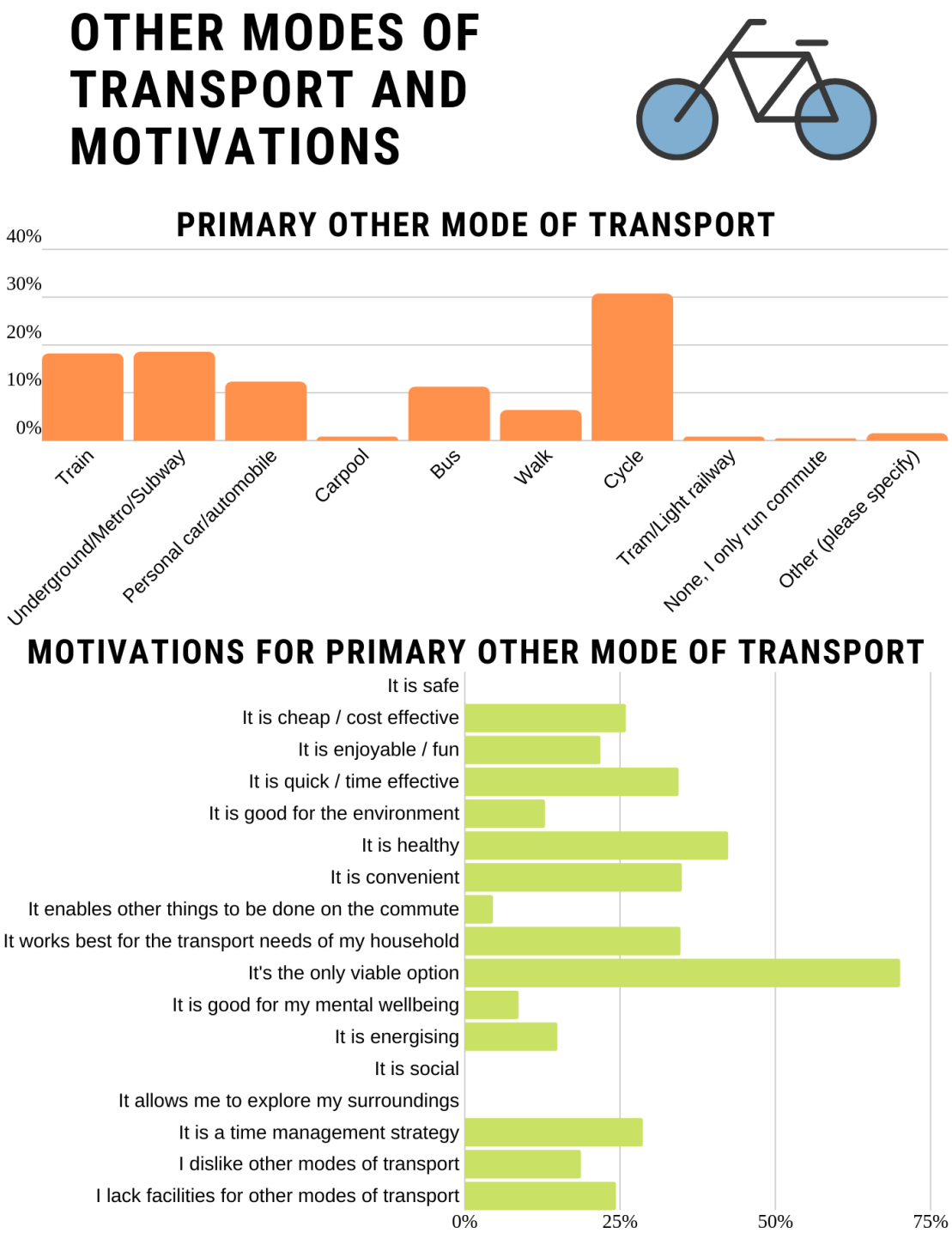
Interestingly, running's attributes as a low carbon and low cost forms of transport was rarely discussed by run-commuters and ranked significantly lower than other motivations for run-commuting (Figure 6.1), despite being a key trait for other active modes (Handy et al, 2014). These were often viewed more as positive externalities rather than motivational forces behind run-commuting and were seldom elaborated on in interviews. However, the modes of transport run-commuters are switching from may prove instructive here, as it is with all mobility changes (Clark et al, 2016). As seen in Figure 6.2 when not run-commuting, run-commuters are overwhelmingly commuting by active modes or public transport. Around 30% of run-commuters primarily commute by bicycle when not run-commuting, representing the most popular other commuting mode for run-commuters. The high presence of active commuting modes proves crucial here. It hints as to why the environmental and financial motivations for run-commuting were less marked– cycling is another low emissions and low cost transport mode, so these benefits are felt less strongly. The high presence of public transport, accounting for almost 50% of run-commuters' primary other mode of commuting, is also important. Public transport is associated with lower per capita emissions than automobility and sunk costs in the form of season tickets or the like, resulting in a similar reduction in these motivations.

This information also demonstrates the modes of transport it may be easier to switch to run-commuting from. Active modes and public transport seem to offer the greatest encouragement or simplicity in this regards. This is similar to the patterns of changes to mobility practices more widely. Personal automobility has proved the most difficult mobility system to break out of not only for the inherent gravitational forces keeping people within their cars but also the multitude of other practices bundled with automobility, increasing car dependence and making it harder to switch to modes (Sheller, 2004; Cass and Faulconbridge, 2016; Kershaw et al, 2018). Indeed, only 12.2% of run-commuters primarily commute by car. However, the synergies between public transport and other active transport modes may also be fuelling the patterns seen here. In terms of motivations, there are important similarities and differences between practitioners' primary other modes of commuting (mostly active and public transport) and run-commuting that are

integral to understanding the practice. As seen in Figure 6.2, health, convenience, and time-management all feature prominently in respondent's reasons for choosing their primary other mode of commuting. This suggests there are sensibilities and dispositions, which may be common and even portable among other active and public forms of transport. A key difference here however, is viability. This was overwhelmingly (70%) chosen as the top reason for commuting by their primary other mode (Figure 6.2) but was only selected by 5% of run-commuters as their top reason for run-commuting. This suggests that run-commuting may not be an easy mode to commute by and struggles for viability even for those who do it. This indicates that while similarities in motivations exist between run-commuters' primary other modes of commuting and run-commuting, the driving forces of health, sport and time must be significantly greater in run-commuting to overcome the issue of viability.

Exploring the factors that motivate run-commutes reveal an eclectic set of influences, many of which act in different combinations to influence practitioners. Not all of the motivations discussed in this section would generally be associated with transport decision-making and rationales. While decisions and rationales aren't always key in transport behaviour changes (see Schwanen et al, 2012 on habits and change), run-commuting is rarely ever fallen into. Indeed the most important motivations relate to desires for sporting success and physical/mental health in a manner that harmonises with other important rhythms and demands of life, and effectively sequences sets of practices. This positions time as perhaps the overarching motivation for run-commuting and answers the specific question of why run on the commute. The enjoyment and the experience of run-commuting also proves influential, especially when considered alongside other commuting experiences. Such comparisons also reveal the more traditionally transport-related advantages run-commuting has over other transport modes in relation to convenience, autonomy, flexibility and speed. Crucial in understanding these is to recognise the impact run-commuters' other modes of commuting have on motivations and how negative perceptions of some practices can bundle with run-commuting to make it more appealing or how similarities can encourage and promote run-commuting. Of particular note in regard to the latter is run-commuting's relationship with cycling. There are similar elements of practice, as well as logistics, meanings, sensibilities, dispositions and experiences between cycling and running to work that may influence motivations and proclivities for run-

Figure 6.2 Run-commuters' other modes of transport



commuting, and is significant in the production, sustaining and taking place of run-commuting.

Run-commuting catalysts

The textured portrait of motivations driving people to run-commute is something I find it striking. But equally I find it slightly curious that none of these motivations would necessarily be classed as new. Based upon the rise of run-commuting outlined so far in this thesis, it would be fair to presume that something must be fuelling these increasing rates. The presence of a motivational force that did not exist previously would have helped explained this. However, the key drivers of health, time and sport predate the rise of run-commuting being studied in this project. While it certainly is the case that more people are running than ever before (Cook et al, 2016a), that there is greater public health awareness and increasing initiatives around physical activity and active commuting (de Nazalle et al, 2011; Jarrett et al, 2012; Andersen, 2016; Flint et al, 2016), and that the digitalisation and mobilisation of work has created greater time-management pressures making it more difficult to coordinate everyday practices (Wajcman, 2015; ter Hoeven and van Zoonen, 2015; Snyder, 2016), I am not convinced that these alone could motivate the rise of run-commuting occurring in the UK. These wider influences have certainly impacted on run-commuting but I feel the question of why people actually start run-commuting is not answered fully by these factors.

This section explores what it is that actually converts this motivation into practice. In other words, what the catalysts for run-commuting are. These are important aspects of run-commuting to understand, offering an insight to the cause of mobility changes and the transformation of practices rather than just the motivations behind them. This speaks to how mobility decisions are entangled with social practices and social life, for which discussions of rational and utilitarian motivations for transport choices (such as those above) are important but insufficient at explaining such shifts (Mokhtarian et al, 2015; Kent et al, 2017). The circling of social practices which mobilities interact, embed and bundle with means changes within any of these practices, not just within mobility, can initiate new commuting practices to be actioned (Shove et al, 2012; Watson, 2012), while changes can be intrinsically incentivised too (Mokhtarian, et al, 2015). Kent et al (2017) refer to these as

catalysts, the precise moments and causes that lead to new mobility practices being actioned. These need not be major changes or disruptions, however, as Cass and Faulconbridge (2016) demonstrated both minor and major changes in a range of everyday practices can cause shifts in mobile practices. As such, we see resonances to what Chatterjee et al (2013) refer to as triggers (for more major changes like life events or modifications to external environments) and to Bissell's (2014a: p.191) notion of tipping points, where a series of minor changes, a "slow creep" of transformations, can build up into a tipping point where modal shift occurs.

As shown in Figure 6.3, there are a wide variety of catalysts, of predominantly the big variety, that have prompted people to start run-commuting. The breadth here is quite striking. A vast array of factors, relating to different practices of work, life, health and exercise, have all acted as catalysts for different people. While the remainder of this section will identify trends and explore reasons within this breadth of catalysts, this collection is noteworthy in itself. It supports the relational approach being adopted to understanding run-commuting in this project and demonstrates the variety of practices run-commuting bundles with. In essence, with run-commuting being motivated by desires to fit running practices more easily into everyday life and (in fewer cases) to improve commuting experiences, then changes in any of aspect of this arenas, particularly those that squeeze time and the sequencing of practices, are seemingly capable of catalysing new mobility practices. To fully encapsulate this range, the 'other' category of the survey has been filtered and re-categorised for some aspects of the analysis (Figure 6.3).

Time squeezes

Changes in a variety of everyday practices were discussed in the research that functioned to increase time pressures and to squeeze the coordination of practices further, producing the a-synchronicities that can motivate run-commuting. These were apparent in a variety of different spheres and practices, but by a significant margin the most common and prominent catalyst in people starting to run-commute is an increase in running requirements (Figure 6.3). Nearly half of all respondents to the survey stated that an increase in their running needs (in terms of distances, durations and frequencies) or trying to maintain a high volume of

running was the reason they started run-commuting. This commonly cropped up in discussions with run-commuters:

> **Malcolm:** I got myself into running in a big way and I thought the only way I'm going to be able to get the mileage in that I want to get, I'm going to have to run-commute.

Interestingly, this would appear to be an increase in running from those who already run, rather than new runners. Only a handful of people reported the catalyst for their run-commuting to be a motivation to run or an desire/need for exercise/health (Figure 6.3). This would suggest that run-commuting is a practice for already established runners rather than for those taking up running, as the running descriptors shown in Figure 5.11 also support. From a public health perspective, this point limits run-commuting potential as a practice. Given that new (and potential) runners are likely to be just as time-constrained and in need of time-efficient exercise opportunities as established runners, this would be a facet of the practice in need of resolution if its potential value as a public health practice is to be realised.

Of particular note in understanding the increased running requirements catalysing run-commuting, is the role of running races, events or challenges. A clear emphasis on training for events – in particular half marathons and marathons – was evident in the survey. Run-commuters explained that they took up run-commuting due to:

> **Survey respondent #519 (Male, 35-39):** Marathon training.
>
> **Survey respondent #540 (Male, 55 -59):** Training for 10k/10m/half marathons.

While not all run-commuters will have experienced an increase in running requirements due to participation in such events, they appear to be significant for many starting to run-commute. This also speaks to the temporal organisation of running, something that integral to run-commuting practices. As Smith (2002) shows, there are notable rhythms associated with running that occur over a range of scales. On a yearly scale, there tends to be a seasonality to running and running events, peaking in the summer (Sport England, 2012). The same is visible within run-commuting patterns discussed in Chapter 5. It is common for those partaking in running events to be following some form of plan or programme aiming to achieve their goals within the events (Shipway et al, 2013; Edensor and Larsen, 2018). In this way, the temporal organisation of running events can also drive and orchestrate

running rhythms on a monthly and weekly basis too. As Allen-Collinson and Hockey (2001) explain, training programmes usually call for runs of different distance, intensity, speed and structure to be performed on different days of the week. Run-commuting both reflects this, in the number of run-commutes done a week and with the different types of runs performed on the commute (discussed in Chapters 5 and 9), and challenges it. Some run-commuters are departing from the traditional temporal organisation of running that plans lay down. For example, traditionally running plans dictate a long run should occurs on a Sunday morning based on societal patterns of time, labour and daylight (Smith, 2002; Cook et al, 2016a), however some run-commuters may undertake it on the commute where their time and practice-sequencing might be most permitting.

Although these cumulative running rhythms clearly bear influence on run-commuting, boiling this down to the individual level demonstrates how the temporal organisation of running can act as a catalyst for run-commuting. To take the summer peak of running as an example, the collective increase in running actually masks a greater fluctuation of running within individuals. Typically, a runner competing in endurance events, will target a small number of events per year (Smith, 2002). Each event will be accompanied by a training plan, which can vary in duration from a few weeks to multiple months (Edensor and Larsen, 2018). It is the commencement of these training plans that serve to increase running requirements and therefore prompt the turn to run-commuting. Although many run-commuters do continue to run-commute upon completion of a training programme or event, for some, the rhythm of their running-event participant orchestrates a rise and fall in the need to run-commute and serves to re-catalyse run-commuting on multiple occasions throughout the year. As Sam explained, it "increases with the marathon training cycle". In this way, it is perhaps unsurprising that increasing running requirements serves as the preeminent catalyst in run-commuting uptake. Compared to some of the other catalysts discussed below, running is more fluctuating in its demands than other rhythms. Just observing the rhythm of running events, let alone other important rhythms such as injury, fitness, desire, weather and light, reveals a practice that oscillates and swings in the demands it places upon practitioners - its ebb and flow creating the repeating increases in running requirements that catalyse, re-catalyse and sustain run-commuting.

As seen in Figure 6.3 however, it is not just running-related catalysts that action run-commuting. Research has shown the pressure running practices can put upon

relationships (Lamont et al, 2019; Lev and Zach, 2020), therefore, the demands or desires of family life appears to be crucial to run-commuting practices. I was surprised then that these did not feature more highly among the catalysts reported in the survey. Only 5.23% of respondents chose this and often it was reported as increasing family commitments and most commonly the birth of children:

> **Sam:** I think that fundamentally, having children and that lack of time has led me to run-commuting, and I'd probably wouldn't have done it without having children … There's a few mates in my running club that had kids and when they've had kids I've seen that they've started run-commuting because your life changes when you have children in terms of your commitments at home and stuff. You can't just go for runs all the time.

The impact of run-commuting on parenting and family relationships are explored more in Chapter 7 but given the gendered and aged nature of run-commuters with dependants discussed in the last chapter, this catalyst was predominantly reported by male and middle-aged run-commuters (Figure 6.3). The rhythm of increased time-demands from home life are important in understanding their lower profile in catalysing run-commuting. The rhythms here are quite different to running-related changes, being more of a transitional ruptures. Having children and being a parent is not a time demand that ebbs and flows. It is a constant demand that was not there one day but is then continuously there. While the nature of those family commitments may change over time and have their own rhythms (Schwanen et al, 2008; Holdsworth, 2013), their stability in comparison to running demands could indicate why running was more commonly perceived as placing an increased demand on a person's time rather than family life. For most, running is definitely a lower priority than family or home life, and therefore it is running that needs to fit in with life, rather than the other way round (Nomaguchi and Bianchi, 2004; Cohen, 2016; Andreasson et al, 2018). Together, these indicate why running demands are more commonly considered to be the catalyst for run-commuting than family commitments, despite both having important parts to play in enabling the seamless integration of life and running and the sequencing of practices that it necessitates.

The same is true for the aspects at the other end of the commute. Increasing work demands and hours was rarely chosen as the catalyst for run-commuting. Only 1.22% of respondents reported this as their trigger for starting to run-commute (Figure 6.3) and all of these were female. Although no explanations are given in the survey or interviews about this, one possible account is that the percentage of

women working part-time is falling, with more women working full-time hours than ever before (Powell, 2019). A switch from part-time to full-time could be the push some run-commuters experienced to take up run-commuting. Initially, I found the low profile of increasing work hours as a catalyst quite surprising. Work is one of the largest demands on people's time, greater than almost any other everyday practice. However, the rhythm and temporal organisation of work may provide the answer once more. For full-time workers, as most run-commuters are, the rhythms of working hours are generally stable. There are daily, weekly or seasonal fluctuations in working hours and demands of the job but in the longer term there is a stability to working hours. Therefore, there are few transitional ruptures that would alter working hours and trigger run-commuting. The ebbing, flowing and daily/weekly variations of working hours do impact on run-commuting rates, however, these tend to play into decisions about whether to run-commute on any given day rather than whether to take up run-commuting altogether (explored in Chapter 8). So investigating catalysts to run-commuting by exploring time squeezes reveal that increases in running requirements are by far the largest impetus for the uptake of run-commuting. While the total time demand from work and home life may be greater, their rhythms and temporal organisation are generally more stable, and therefore the oscillation of running rhythms are generally perceived to be the catalyst – providing the triggers and tipping points for the uptake of run-commuting.

Desires for greater time-efficiency

It is not the case, however, that increases in time demands are always needed to catalyse run-commuting. Not all run-commuters partake in running events, and therefore their running rhythms do not necessarily ebb and flow in accordance with training programmes. Injury, fitness and desire aside, some runners exhibit a stability and continuity to their running volume and patterns that are unlikely to prompt a need to run-commute. Likewise, not all run-commuters experience increasing demands from home or work. The desire for time-efficiency and a smoother sequencing of practices through run-commuting is not only spurred when additional demands are placed. This desire can derive from an unhappiness with the status quo and a want to find a more harmonious method of integrating these pre-existing practices alongside one another. This is more akin to transformations caused by a

slow creep towards a tipping point (Bissell, 2014a) than a distinct trigger, as explained by Dominic:

> **Dominic:** [It wasn't a case of running increases] because I was doing a lot less running back then. But then it's a weird one, because the less you do of something, even when you do do it, you still consider it to take up a lot of your time disproportionately. I suppose in parts of my heart, there was some quest for time-saving, whether conscious or subconscious.

The social nature of being a human, of sharing our lives with others and wanting to maintain intimate, familial and social relations can be challenged by regularly participation in hobbies, exercise and sport (Gillespie et al, 2002; Stalp, 2006). These are often private passions and individual pursuits that can be incongruous with other aspects of life. Hence, a desire to manage these competing demands better, even in the absence of increased demands, can catalyse run-commuting (as discussed further in Chapter 7). This is also supported by the survey results where 3.14% of respondents reported life efficiency as being their reason for taking up run-commuting (Figure 6.3), rather than any particular trigger.

Changing viabilities

There is another set of run-commuting catalysts where increasing time pressures are similarly absent. These concern the viability of run-commuting and changes that help to enable run-commuting. Run-commuters reported a variety of changes that occurred in their home, work, and commuting lives that made run-commuting more possible and therefore prompted them to do so. The most common of these was a change of job or job location (Figure 6.3), as was the case with Mia:

> **Mia:** Particularly with this new job, and I went, "I don't feel comfortable biking down that road". So I was going to bike it, but decided to take the bus for the first couple of months just to kind of see what the route was like. Saw what the road was like, and just thought, "No. I'm not doing it. I don't feel safe doing it on the road." But I knew that being able to get a workout in and take some time for myself and sweat a little bit before I got home was really good for my sanity so I just went, "Well, guess I'll have to run, then".

While in Mia's circumstances, a job move served to make alternative transport options less appealing, they can also function to change commuting distances, perhaps to something more runnable, offer new (more desirable) route options, or may change the workplace facilities and cultures they experience (see Chapter 8 for a discussion of the latter). These viability factors also appeared in other catalysts. The viability of the distance and route to work where also improved for the 4.7% of respondents who reported a change of house/residential as their catalyst, such as Sara:

> **Sara:** I'm now the mad fitness freak, yeah. But I used to run as a hobby back then, but I didn't run-commute because I always thought it was beyond the distance that I could run. I never really thought of it as an option. And then we moved house. We work in the city centre and then moved out this side, which is closer.

Improved workplace facilities increasing the viability of run-commuting was reported by 2.96% of respondents. The latter was most prominent among older run-commuters (Figure 6.3). This could be a product of their seniority within their work bestowing them greater facilities or because the length of their tenure entails that they have experienced various improvements, modifications and renovations to workplace buildings. The catalysts reported in home/work life demonstrate some of the factors that affect the viability of run-commuting and how changes in the distance and route of a commute as well as the facilities available at workplaces can catalyse people to start run-commuting. These elements can function as enablers and constraints for run-commuters in different ways and are important in producing run-commuting as a practice, as discussed further in Chapters 8 and 9.

Although few in number, it is interesting that some transport-related factors catalysed run-commuting for practitioners. I've suggested that run-commuting is a practice much more about running than it is commuting and that most run-commuters appear to be more concerned, motivated and catalysed by running then they are commuting. However, it may have by-products and positive externalities for commuting lives and some run-commuters report that the spark for their run-commuting was a transport-related factor. For example, 1.74% and 1.57% of run-commuters reported their catalysts to be a desire for an efficient/reliable transport mode and to save money respectively. These aspects relate to the ideas discussed above concerning the convenience, autonomy and flexibility of run-commuting as well as its low cost of entry. Clearly, these benefits are strong enough (especially in

comparison to other transport modes) for some practitioners that it served to motivate their run-commuting rather than just being a by-product.

These benefits will also have been felt by those who reported the most popular transport-related catalyst – that of disruption. Disruption is garnering attention within mobility and transport literature regarding the role it can play in encouraging habits to change (Marsden and Docherty, 2013; Murray and Doughty, 2016; Kent et al, 2017). Breakdowns, delays and disorder in usual commuting routines force commuters to find other ways. Doing so asks them to consider transport options they may not have done so previously, that they may have thought were not viable or not convenient. In turn, these perceptions may be challenged and for the 4.5% of run-commuters who were catalysed by disruption (Figure 6.3), this would appear to be the case. For example, Tube strikes in London are generally accompanied by many social media comments about the increased visibility of run-commuting:

> "All ready for my first attempt at #runcommute #TubeStrike #London #run2work" (Hart, 2015).
>
> "Who else avoided the bus queues today and ran their commute #ukrunchat #running #runcommute #commute #tubestrike #run" (Price, 2015).
>
> "What #TubeStrike? Monday morning #RunCommute #BusinessAsUsual #ukrunchat" (Kallicharan, 2017).
>
> "Pretty sure tube drivers are acting as part of a wider initiative to promote a healthy lifestyle #tubestrike #runcommute #walktowork" (Hannah, 2015).
>
> "Wonder how many will have found the joy of #runcommute during this #TubeStrike? #ukrunchat #running" (Tan, 2017).

The increased attention to and apparent uptake in run-commuting that occurs during Tube strikes are emblematic of how disruption can catalyse new routines, in this case, prompting the uptake of run-commuting. But it is not just pre-advertised disruption forcing modal switch that function to catalyse run-commuting. Experiencing unexpected disruption can also catalyse such changes, as Tyler explained:

> **Tyler:** I found myself stuck on the bus one morning. I got up early because I needed to work early and the traffic was terrible and I was just stuck. I

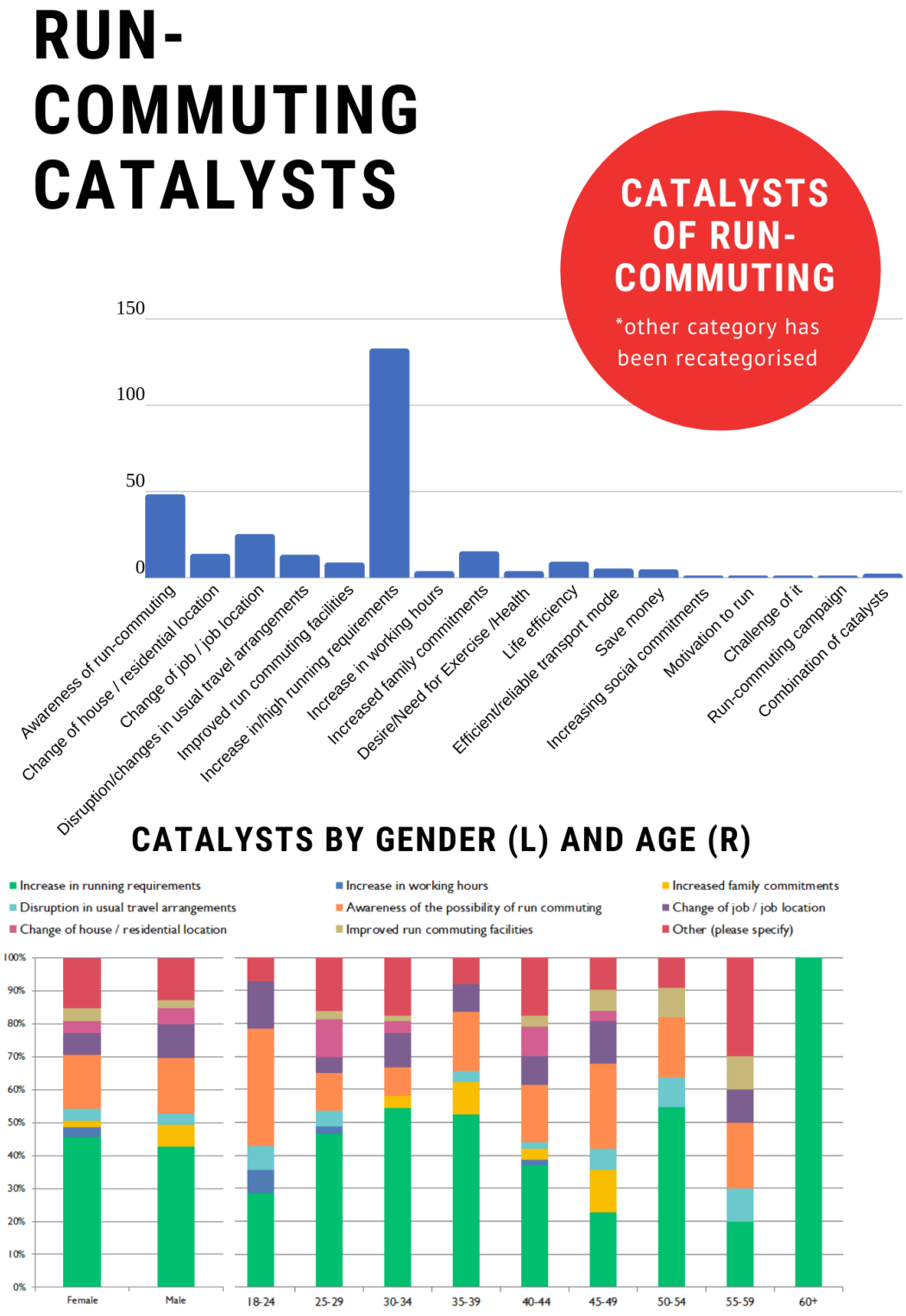
> was so fed up that it kind of hit me that perhaps… It had never really crossed my mind that it [run-commuting] was a feasible thing to do, because I'd always thought the logistics were going to be problematic. I'd considered it before and ruled it out really, because of the logistics. But I was just so frustrated … It's not actually that bad … I just needed to be a bit more organised.

Here we can see that disruption, whether planned or spontaneous, can catalyse run-commuting by forcing or prompting people to try it. In turn, this makes it more viable as the barriers to run-commuting are realised to be not as great or troublesome as first thought and/or there were other benefits of the run-commuting experience that run-commuters wished to maintain. This often led to run-commuters continuing with the practice even once the disruption subsided.

The consideration of other possibilities that disruptions encourage has wider significance in understanding the rise of run-commuting too. For me, the most interesting catalyst reported by respondents was the second most common one – an awareness of the possibility of run-commuting (Figure 6.3). This implies a few key ideas. Firstly, run-commuting is not a well-known and relatively niche form of transport. Secondly, that there are many people who have similar difficulties in harmonising the competing temporal demands of everyday practices but have yet to find a solution. Thirdly, that for at least some of these people, an awareness of run-commuting presents such a solution to these issues. As such, an awareness and recognition deficit is arguably one of the key barriers to run-commuting. Should it be a practice worthwhile promoting and endeavouring to expand, then attempting to improve the cognizance of run-commuting would certainly be a good starting point.

Exploring the catalysts of run-commuting as reported by practitioners has permitted insights into the sparks that have prompted an uptake of a new practice and the stimuli to convert motivation into action. These are sparks that have come from a wide variety of sources and realms of life, demonstrating the complex embeddedness of run-commuting with other everyday practices and establishing the value of a relational approach to understanding commuting practices. Some catalysts function to increase time demands on practitioners, making it more difficult to sequence the various rhythms and practices of life together. In the regard, an increase in running requirements was the greatest catalyst with almost half of run-commuters reporting this. Running pressures feature significantly more than

Figure 6.3 Run-commuting catalysts



other increases in time demands such as in family commitments or working hours. The temporal organisation and rhythms of these difference practices, as well as their prioritisation, were suggested as possible reasons for this. Another set of catalysts were identified that involved no increases in time demands but rather functioned to make run-commuting more viable through changing commuting distances, routes or facilities. Although less significant, a very interesting collection of catalysts were identified that demonstrated some run-commuters are being spurred to take up the practice based purely on transport-related considerations. Of particular note here were those who claimed disruptions to their usual commuting routines catalysed run-commuting, demonstrating the important role disruption can have in prompting new habits and practices to be developed. Potentially the most interesting catalyst, however, was an awareness of the possibility of run-commuting. This was the second most common catalyst reported by respondents and indicates a cognizance deficit in relation to run-commuting. What these catalyst indicate, particularly those which involve no increased time demands, is that a latent demand for run-commuting may exist. There are many people who would like to run-commute but for whom it may not yet be viable (or at least they perceive it not to be viable), and many more who experience the problems run-commuting helps to solve but lack an awareness of the possibility of run-commuting. Exploring the array of run-commuting catalysts not only demonstrates how various practices are bundled together in the motivation for, catalysing of and taking place of run-commuting, the impact run-commuting has within these entwined practices but also how they bundle together to accomplish everyday life. In a similar manner to how Watson (2012: p.494) also talks about cycling, these bundles "may provide small, specific but potentially significant opportunities for intervention".

Sustaining run-commuting

This chapter has focussed so far on how people come to run-commuting, what motivations and catalysts have incentivised their practice and sparked it into action. Within these, there were clear imperatives around time, the struggles to effectively sequence everyday practices, and the impact of fluctuating running requirements among others. These emphases raise some interesting questions about how run-

commuting practices are sustained and in turn the future of the practice. I wish to briefly highlight these questions here.

Having established the principle motivators and catalysts for run-commuting, the key question I see them posing regard the tenure of run-commuters' practices. For many practitioners, run-commuting is a pragmatic solution to the incongruity of life's rhythms and practices. In this sense, it is an issue-driven practice. As such, logic could dictate that if the issues, squeezes and a-synchronicities elapse then run-commuting may no longer be needed. As we have seen, there is a kaleidoscope of practices and demands that run-commuters are trying to harmonise. If developments are made in any of these, the need to and desire for run-commuting may subside. People may run less, children may become independent, work pressures may reduce, job moves and house relocations could all feasibly call an end to practitioners' run-commuting. It seems to be a highly susceptible practice in this regard. It should be noted however that many run-commuters have found utility and pleasure in run-commuting beyond its value as a time-management strategy and desire to sustain a run-commuting practice even if the issues which led them there subside (as discussed in Part Three). However, the issue-driven, pragmatic and logistically complex nature of run-commuting make it susceptible to experience high practitioner drop-off. This set of motivations and catalysts invite an exploration of what keeps run-commuters run-commuting after their initial triggers; how their habits, routines and performances produce, reproduce, change and sustain their practice or lead to it fading, breaking down and collapsing as may be the case. As such, this demands attention to how run-commuting practices cease and terminate and what implications that has for the practice. Unfortunately, the focus on current run-commuters in this thesis means this is not possible to explore here but would be a valuable direction for future research.

In lieu of this, the tenure of current run-commuter can be presented to gauge how run-commuting practices are being sustained, changed or breaking down. As can be seen in Figure 6.4, the majority of run-commuters are fairly new to the practice. Almost 29% of current run-commuters have taken up the practice in the last year and three-quarters within the last three years. Once again, there is a notable gendering to the run-commuting tenures shown here. Women are much more likely to be newer run-commuters (Figure 6.4). Just over 65% of female run-commuters have been run-commuting for two years or less, compared to just over 45% of run-commuters of male run-commuters. Indeed, more than half of all one-

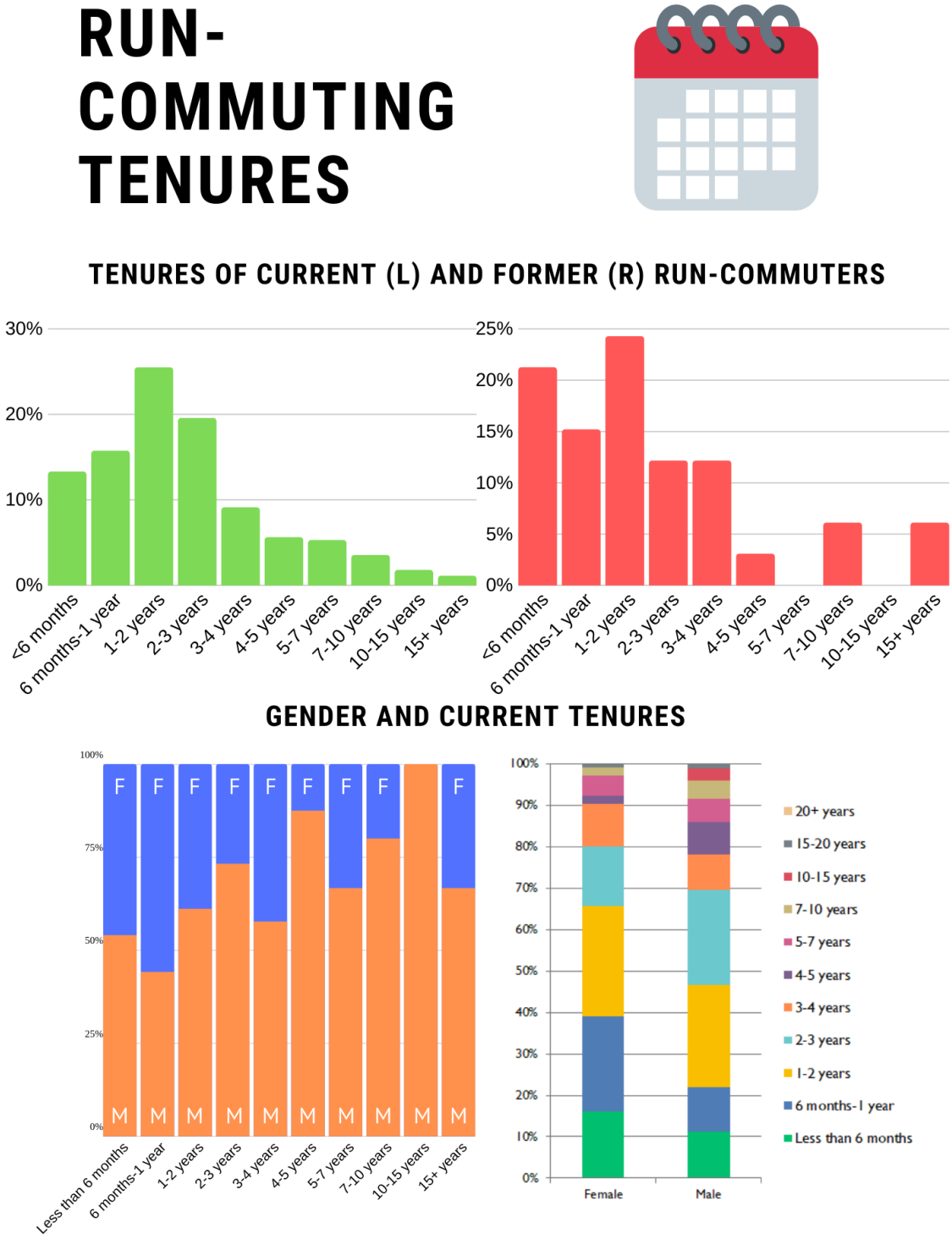
year or less run-commuters are female. These tenures indicate one of two things. Firstly, it could imply a rapidly increasing practice with most practitioners only adopting it recently. The data shown could suggest that the population of run-commuting has grown by 382.67% in the last three years. This is a very high rate of increase and while this may appear to align with the rapid increases also suggested by Strava (see Figure 5.2) and the growing attention to run-commuting more widely, such a rate is likely to be an enthusiastic approximation. Thus, while there is almost certainly a rapidly growing population of run-commuters, the increase calculated by the tenure of current run-commuters suggests something else is also going on.

This something else could be that run-commuters do not run-commute for very long. For some run-commuters, the issues and incongruities motivating a run-commuting practice may not last for more than a couple of years, after which their practice ceases. As such, the temporary solution of run-commuting could lead to a short tenure and high turnover of run-commuters, which would result in a similar pattern being seen. While a very small sample size and certainly in need of more extensive research, examining the tenure of former run-commuters who responded to the survey proves instructive here (Figure 6.4). While some run-commuters are clearly able to sustain long-term run-commuting practices, for the majority of former run-commuters, their tenure was short and in some cases very short - 21.21% ran-commute for less than six months. In total, 84.85% of former run-commuters sustained the practice for four years or less. This certainly supports the idea that run-commuting is a short-term venture for most in a longer biography of commuting and running practices. This questions how run-commuting practices may fall apart or how it continues to sustain or change with such a high turnover of practitioners. Why do people stop run-commuting and what constraints were in play in these cessations? These are certainly questions in need of further research.

Conclusion

This chapter has explored the motivations behind run-commuting practices and the catalysts that have triggered and tipped the uptake of run-commuting. These discussions touched on a huge range of influences on run-commuting practices, demonstrating the complex entangling and bundling of run-commuting with other everyday practices and life's rhythms. Catalyst and motivations could be found in

Figure 6.4 Run-commuting tenures



the spheres of home, work, mobility, and running, illuminating run-commuting's key role in accomplishing everyday life for practitioners. However, time and the effective sequencing of everyday practice was at the heart of both the motivations and catalysts for run-commuting. A desire to better sequence practices and to incorporate running more seamlessly into everyday life was often the key motivation for run-commuting and catalysts that increased time pressures in daily life, in particular increasing running requirements, were most notable. However, others emerged from the research too, including an interesting set of catalysts that increased the viability of run-commuting as a mode of transport, often related to the transport-related motivations around convenience, autonomy and reliability that also served as motivations for commencing the practice, albeit less significantly. Together, these not only serve to show why people start run-commuting but also raise interesting questions about the future of the practice and how run-commuting practices endure, change or fade in the light of the pragmatic, issue-driven nature of it for many run-commuters.

In combination with the previous two chapters, this Part has provided a profile of run-commuting in the UK. I have painted a portrait of a practice little is known about in its emergence, capturing some of the ways in which the practice has changed in recent years and some of its key traits. It has explored how run-commuting is a thing, what it looks like, and why it is done. The next Part will turn its attention to more fine-grained investigation to how run-commuting actually happens through an exploration of how the practice takes place in various spaces key to its production. Many of the threads and themes set up in this Part will be developed further in Part Three, including a focus of how run-commuting is enabled and constrained in these spaces as a political element of the practice.

Part Three:

Spaces of run-commuting

Chapter 7

Home

Part Three of this thesis explores some of the spaces important to the production and taking place of run-commuting. Zooming into five specific spaces enables a fine-grained approach to run-communing practices that highlights the political stakes of these sites. It is here where run-commuting is enabled, motivated and incentivised, where it is constrained, hindered and discouraged, and where it is experienced and lived. This Part explores various factors that impact the practice of run-commuting in spaces that cover either ends of a run-commute as well as those on route: home, work, waypoints, routes and the run itself. By zooming in on these spaces, key common threads in the production of run-commuting and their spatial manifestation become visible, such as logistics, infrastructure, materials, experience, embodiment, rhythms and social relations. Together, the chapters in this Part and the spaces of run-commuting they explore serve to illustrate and analyse how run-commuting actually happens and what it is like to do it. The themes which emerge from this interrogation not only illuminate the production and taking place of run-commuting but provide further evidence about the enabling and constraining factors that are so integral in understanding contemporary run-commuting in the UK.

This interest in the spaces important to the production and taking place of run-commuting begins with an exploration of the home. Home is a relatively immobile space that acts as fixity within run-commuting journeys. It is an important node within the everyday practices, a space where they intersect with each other and run-commuting. Because of this, home spaces not only bookend practitioners' actual running but establishes some of the motivations for run-commuting and where some of its benefits are realised, as hinted at in the last chapter. In this way, home spaces are not only of interest as physical and material sites where run-commuting is produced (taking influence from Jensen, 2013; 2014), but also as sites of logistics, intersections, motivations and experiences where run-commuting is actuated and catalysed. The more fine-grained and qualitative approach of this chapter offers new insights into how the rhythms and practices of life that run-commuters are seeking to harmonise intersect in home spaces and the ways that

home spaces may serve to enable or constrain run-commuting differently. Thus, this chapter is interested in examining how home spaces are important in understanding how and why run-commuting happens, analysing the key considerations and occurrences in home spaces. Doing so will often entail a discussion of very mundane elements related to run-commuting, demonstrating the importance of engaging with the everyday in understanding mobile practices. This begins with a brief explanation of how I have demarcated home for analysis in this chapter. Following this, the major sections of this chapter explore the relationships, experiences and logistics of home spaces, and their contribution to the production of run-commuting practices.

Spaces and practices of home

Spaces of home and the entangled practices that intersect there, including relationships, family, care, parenting, safety, maintenance, leisure, pleasure, education and love, have vast impact on many arenas of life (Blunt and Varley, 2004; Blunt 2005). Mobility choices, preparatory practices and commuting aftermaths happen and influence here too (Holdsworth, 2013). Run-commuting is perhaps tied to home life more intimately than other mobile practices. As seen in Chapter 6, it is more than just a mode of transport or exercise practice, it can also be seen as a time-management practice with wide ramifications on the practices of everyday life it is bundled with, including those related to home spaces. As such, my segregation and demarcation of home spaces in this chapter are purely for analytical purposes. My dissection of home spaces will also concern and explore the other spaces and practices they are connected to where important to do so.

Before beginning that discussion however, there are couple of key points worth noting underpinning my analysis in this chapter. For the purposes of this discussion, I am analytically excluding practitioners' running life from their home life. This is an artificial segregation however. As this chapter will demonstrate, running is intimately entwined with home and the familial practices found there. The sphere of home can both motivate running practices to occur and is greatly affected by them (Cohen, 2016; Lev and Zach, 2020). Many participants in this project are acutely aware of this interweaving, such as Sam, a dad to two young children who explained:

> **Sam:** I'm really an enthusiastic runner. As I've moved from my 20s to 30s and 30s to 40s and got children, health has become an important issue to me. Staying healthy as my children grow up is quite important. Had children slightly later in life, I think. I've got a baby at the moment and a 6-year-old child. So I want to make sure I'm around as they grow up and healthy and can be active with them. So I've found running a good way to stay fit, keep the weight off and stuff. However, as I've kind of become more interested in running, it just take up a large part of my life. And obviously with children, you're fairly time poor. So as I've improved and realised I'm fairly good at running, I've looked at how I can fit training into my life and run-commuting is a really good way to do that.

Here is a recognition that running can have positive benefits for wider home life, such as being a healthy and active parent, but is also something that demands time often at the detriment to family life. So running is a vital component of home life that affects the production of run-commuting. However, I am analytically segregating it in this chapter as the spaces of running will be dealt with more specifically in Chapters 9 and 10. Therefore, this chapter on home spaces will focus more on those other elements and practices that running often detracts from and the practices that occur within home spaces to enable or constrain run-commuting.

The second key point to note regarding spaces of home is that these are both spaces of arrival and departure. As was seen in Figure 5.8, for the majority (58.18%) of run-commuters, home acts as both a site of arrival and departure, while for 20.21% it is only a site of arrival and 21.60% is it only a site of departure. This is important as arriving and departing require different logistics and generate different experiences, and therefore the influence of home spaces here may be different. For instance, many practitioners who only run-commute home do so because the logistics are simpler and home spaces tend to have all the facilities they require:

> **Harriet:** I only ever run from work to home, I've never run from home to work. I'm not the vainest of girls, but like I do want to dry my hair and put a bit of mascara on. It's a right ol' fucking faff running into work … it just makes the logistics harder. I'd have to figure out like having shampoo and stuff. There are showers and they're perfectly nice rooms but I'd need to figure out having a towel and shampoo and everything there. And then I

> always blow-dry my hair. I could not do that but I just need to think about that. And then, do I have like two sets of— I mean, I don't wear a lot of makeup but it's nice to wear a bit and so I do. Do I need that in work as well? It just would require a lot more thought. … and it's really not that much of faff running back from work. So, it's always, always that way.

The varying ways practitioners craft the logistics of their practice (explored more below and in Chapter 8) can be dependent on whether they are arriving or departing and the enabling or constraining factors at different spaces of run-commuting. Within home spaces, many of these factors coalesce in ways that influence run-commuters' individual practices, which this chapter seeks to explore.

Relationships

Home life and the practices bundled within it serve as important motivators and considerations within run-commuting practices. It is often the temporal detriments felt in home life due to the incongruities of running practices that incentivises run-commuting to occur. While these have been explored more widely in Chapter 6, the key motives emerging from practitioners' home lives are worth delving into further here as they illustrate one of the principal ways home spaces help produce run-commuting, by motivating and catalysing it.

Most notably in this regard is the maintenance of relationships. While intimate, personal, familial and parental relations clearly permeate and extend beyond home spaces, the home acts a crucial node in these relationships, it is the space where these relationships are lived and most closely associated with (Mallett, 2004; Blunt, 2005; McDowell, 2007; Wilson et al, 2012). It is these relationships and familial practices that running and the time it demands most negatively influences, consequently affecting the need and desire to run-commute. Children are perhaps the most significant relationship in this regard, with many participants revealing an incongruity between running practices, work and parenthood. Firstly, children tend to be on different daily rhythms to adults, particularly their rhythms of sleep, which are generally more compressed than adults'. The earlier bedtimes of children can make it difficult for working adults to spend time with their children, help put them to bed and maintain their running practice. Sam demonstrates this well once again:

> **Sam:** Lily, the baby, goes to bed at about 6:30. I don't always get home for that, to be honest. I try to, but it doesn't always happen. Oscar goes to bed about 8 o'clock now and so I'm nearly always home for that, unless … I go to my running club on Tuesday.

Also apparent in Sam's explanation is the orchestration children can have within run-commuting practices. Here Sam is trying to time his run-commute home to coincide with these rhythms of bedtime, and in doing so, harmonising children's rhythms with their own wider working and running rhythms.

Further to these rhythms of sleep, a desire to spend time with children and/or the need to carry out responsibilities pertaining to them can also motivate people to seek more time-efficient and family-friendly ways to fit running into their everyday life:

> **Callum:** I've got two young children. I've got a two-year-old and a four-month-old. So very young, very busy. So don't have a lot of time for running, really. Yeah, that's it, really. Don't do a lot apart from work and childcare.

> **Malcom:** I've got 3 small kids. Keep me very busy. In a way, run-commuting is a way to get my running in, in a way that doesn't impact on family life. My eldest is 9 and I've got 6-year-old twins. They make our lives difficult but they're great.

As we can see, for some, these competing demands and rhythms of parenthood and running lead to run-commuting as an appropriate solution. However, the gendering of this relationship between children and run-commuting is also visible here. As shown in Chapter 5, run-commuters who have children are much more likely to be male. This suggests that run-commuting is less likely to provide the solution for working woman with children who are time-poor but want some form of physical activity. Research in mobility studies have long shown that mobility practices and patterns are closely tied to the gendered divisions and rhythms of domestic responsibilities alongside many other entanglements (Law, 1999; Hanson, 2010). Discussions with male participants in this project suggest such factors may be affective here, explaining that their partners often take on more of the childcare responsibilities and/or give up work for a period of time:

> **Sam**: But other friends I've seen sort of like searching around for hobbies, and I think my wife's in that kind of phase at the moment. She likes to do a bit of exercise but just kind of a fitness thing … She's a qualified teacher,

> although she's kind of a stay-at-home mom at the moment. She did her first chance of maternity leave when our son was born and then went to work 3 days a week, and when the second child was born, she's completed the maternity leave and she started working again part-time. But we found that it was so much nicer with her not working, we've decided to have another year where she's at home with the kids and that does mean, on a selfish point of view, that I can do a lot more marathon training. I wouldn't be able to train for a marathon if she was working as well … It's very stressful in the morning if you're both working and you've got two children to take to school and nursery and you've got two children to pick up for school and nursery and then you've got dinner to buy, dinner to make. It's really, really hard. And with one person at home all day, it makes it a lot easier. So while there's a huge financial kind of sacrifice to make, we've taken a decision about for at least one more year, one more academic year, she's going to be at home full-time.

Here we can see the gendering of childcare responsibilities not only decreases the chances that women with children may run-commute, but that division of parental labour can actually increase the opportunities for dads to run-commute. The unequal division of childcare in Sam's home life has eased some of the responsibilities he has around commuting time, and in turn, makes it easier for him to run-commute and use that for marathon training.

Although a collaborative decision made for the good of the household, a clear politics is evident here. This is a politics both in regards to the gendered division of home life responsibilities, of care relations, and the arrangements of relative mobility and immobility of household members (see also Plyushteva and Schwanen's, 2018 discussion of this over the life course). This has resulted in fewer mums being able to run-commute than dads, a limiting of one person's mobility leading to increased opportunities for others. In Sam's case, the decision for his wife to extend her maternity leave, and thereby limiting the commuting demands placed upon her, results in her being relatively more fixed within the home space and able to undertake more of the demands which take place in and emanate from there. This, in turn, gifts Sam more time within which to run-commute. This is well-recognised by Sam, who forecasts changes to his running practice when his wife returns to work:

> **Sam:** I think once my wife goes back to work… Like, I'm going for a PB [personal best] marathon this year. I think I'll probably have to stop that kind of relentless drive to get PBs. I'll see. But I think I'll have to be a little bit less selfish with the running once my wife goes back to work.

Visible here, and common within home spaces (Pennartz and Niehof, 2019), decisions are not being made at the individual level but rather at the household level. Decisions around work, childcare, leisure and health are being considered as an ensemble where multiple fates are entwined in and affected by single decisions. In many ways, run-commuting, as with many mobility choices (see Watson, 2012; Cass and Faulconbridge, 2016), may have little to do with transport considerations, rather being chosen for the various ways it helps to facilitate, perform, accomplish and co-ordinate various household and family practices it is bundled with.

However, it is not only relationships with children and the division of parental responsibilities that influence run-commuting practices. For the 59.36% of run-commuters who do not have any children or dependents (see Figure 5.4) there are other important relationships within home spaces that are also affected by practitioners' running practices. These too can prompt quests for more time-efficient ways of running that result in a lower impact on these relationships. Here, relationships with partners tend to be the most crucial:

> **Dominic:** I do it because it allows me to get the quantity of running in that I need without impacting other time constraints that I've got in my life. It's time with my wife, it's other household chores, it's other responsibilities. I suppose a big drive of it was, I was always very conscious that my wife has always been very comfortable with the amount of time I spend running. She's never really imposed any constraints really on it. She's has sort of said, "Look, you've got to be home by this time because we're going out," but she's not said, "No, you're not going running today," or whatever. She's always recognised that running is a very important thing to me and it would be detrimental for me not to run and to get something in. And so because of that, I'm always very conscious that I don't want to outstay my welcome doing it. So where I can cut down the amount of time I do it or free up as much time as possible elsewhere to allow us to just spend time together or do this or do that is very welcome.

Maintaining regular running practices requires time (Smith, 2002; Allen-Collinson, 2003; Burlot et al, 2018) and evident in these quotes, is the recognition that this

can have a significant impact on runners' partners, their relationships, any joint practices (such as relaxing, house maintenance etc) as well as the runner themselves (Andreasson et al, 2018; Lev and Zacvh, forthcoming). This pressure can incentivise run-commuting out of obligation, desire or guilt, and thus becomes a way to reduce this burden and "potentially save your relationships" (Sara).

Beyond the impact on relationships, the benefits and motivations derived from the wider time-efficiency of run-commuting is also visible in these explanations. Moving the time-space of running to occur during the commute helps free up time elsewhere in the day, more efficiently sequencing the everyday practices of home spaces, which can then be used to help undertake other related activities, be that an obligation or purely for pleasure. In these various ways, home spaces and the rhythms, practices, duties, desires and relationships related to these spaces help to produce run-commuting practices. They provide the foundations and incongruities that motivate and encourage the uptake of run-commuting, they structure some of the enabling and constraining factors that contribute to the politics, gendering and bundling of run-commuting, as well presenting feedback loops where the benefits of run-commuting can be felt.

Experiencing run-commuting benefits

As well as these time-efficiency, relationship and practices of home-related benefits, home spaces are also key sites where wider embodied and experiential benefits of run-commuting are most acutely felt. This is particularly the case for run-commuting journeys where home spaces act as spaces of arrival and the end of run-commuting. As such, the experiential benefits of these journeys will be focused in this section, which also develops ideas presented in the last chapter related to perceptions of travel time and commuting, as well as the relationships these have with the motivations for run-commuting.

In recounting or explaining their experiences of returning home after a run-commute, many participants reported a general sense of positivity and and improvements in their physical and mental state:

> **Callum:** You get sort of different endorphins, I think, from running. So I feel a bit better when I get home from my run.

> **Lisa:** Well, I definitely enjoy the benefits. So I enjoy getting home and being awake and cheerful and I'm less achy and tired in my body. Everything's like more switched on so I'm not just like floppy and useless.

There is a clear sense that run-commuting results in positive experiences, both physically and mentally. While the above quotes are broader in their description of this, elsewhere run-commuters explained these benefits more clearly as relating to their physical and mental wellbeing, particularly surrounding the idea of feeling mentally and/or physically energised after arriving home:

> **Sara:** I find it good for mental health. It's quite good to either clear your mind of busyness— Particularly after work if you had a busy day at work, it's quite good to just have that run home. I can either empty my brain or try and think about other things or… I find it yeah, quite good for reducing stress levels.

> **Lisa:** It wakes me up and I feel in a good mood when I get home. If I came on the Tube and then got the train and I got home, I'd be in a foul mood, I'd be really depressed, I'd have no energy. I'd sit on the sofa and probably fall asleep before my husband has made me dinner. Then I'd fall asleep straight after dinner when we're supposed to be watching something on TV. And if I've run home, I can cook dinner. I wouldn't just plop on the sofa. I'd be like walking around doing things. I'll stay awake all evening. It's much better.

For many then, run-commuting is actually a practice that energises and refreshes rather than fatigues. Given the active nature of running, this may seem slightly paradoxical but it is an effect of run-commuting most participants recognised and has continuities with wider running experiences (see Cregan-Reid, 2016). While some participants do not always find run-commuting pleasurable in this way, particularly when starting out (see Chapter 10), this was infrequent and a generally entailed exhaustion after a run-commute on odd occasions.

Crucial in understanding these experiences is the sense of relationality discussed in all of these quotes above. Here, the experiential benefits of run-commuting are borne in relation to other experiences and perceptions. Firstly, many run-commuters discussed the change in their feelings and mood over the course of the journey, comparing their experiences once at home to those at the beginning of the run:

> **Carl:** I know that a stressful day can make it harder to exercise in the evening. You just feel a bit zonked, which makes easy running okay, a bit cathartic really.

> **Simon:** So obviously we're coming towards the end now. How are you feeling?

> **Mia:** Oh, right now I'm am the happiest little Larry in the world. I'm so like… I've gone from stress levels up here from this almost god awful week with work being stressful, and I'm just kind of like, "Yeah! Everything's peachy."

The sense of the run-commuting journey as being in some ways therapeutic is palpable here. The negative effects of a stressful or hard day can be remediated by running and a sense of catharsis and salubrity be reached once arriving home. Such positive affects are also found in other active modes of transport (see Gatersleben and Uzzell, 2007) and are important elements of the practices.

Secondly, embodied benefits of run-commuting are also realised in relation to possible or perceived experiences. It is a relation to what could have been. Common in run-commuters explanations post-run feelings is a comparison to how that experience would have been if commuting by a different mode of transport. It is a comparison informed by other experiences of commuting and generally results in run-commuting being discussed very favourably:

> **Sam:** It's much more relaxing to me than battling my way onto a Tube, arriving at the platform to find out that trains are cancelled or waiting for much longer than you think—all these kinds of things that come with taking public transport that are out of your hands. Whereas you're in control of this particular commute.

The recentness of many practitioners' commencements of run-commuting and the multi-modal nature of their commuting practices undoubtedly helps inform these experiences. They have present and tangible experiences against which to compare their run-commuting experiences and the benefits they sense once home are crucial elements of the practice and motivations for run-commuting (as was discussed in Chapter 6).

While not commonly the primary motivation or catalyst for run-commuting, these positive physical and mental experiences post-run form a major impetus for run-commuters continuation of the practice. Such changing motivations for sustaining run-commuting practices were commonly reported by run-commuters, providing practitioners with other reasons to continue:

> **Sam:** Funnily enough, I've kind of fallen gradually into run-commuting. I kind of started it a few years ago as a kind of, "Well, let's just see what this is like if you just run to work." And it felt like really hard work at first. I was like, "Oh god." Getting up in the morning, I'd much rather just— I always cycled in, actually. Much rather cycle. It's nice and easy. I'm not really up for this and it was a bit of a labour. And gradually, it's become something that I kind of thought, "Wow, this is like—" As I found new routes that are pedestrian-free almost and quite tranquil and as I've more got into my running and found that running is really not about the destination, it's about the experience for me, run-commuting has become really enjoyable and I've really upped it this year. And in fact, I've kind of almost come to a decision this year that my primary way of getting to work in the winter is going to be run-commuting.

These changing motivations are important for understanding the emergence and production of run-commuting in the UK. For a predominantly issue-driven practice, it indicates ways in which run-commuters' practices alter and shift once commenced and hint towards a more sustainable practice in the future.

These changing motivations also relate to transforming perceptions of travel time and commuting catalysed by the uptake of run-commuting that many practitioners undergo. Although not universal (especially for those who already actively commuted), many participants in the study spoke of their dislike of commuting and the time it takes, deeming it to be closer to a waste than a gift (Jain and Lyons, 2008):

> **Lisa:** I don't really like the commuting … I think because the commute is a specific, arduous journey that you have to do … Like sometimes, when I finish work, I'm like, "I could just go to sleep now and I'll be here in the morning already." Like why do I need to go through this whole journey and then go through this whole journey again? I know I'm going to like being at home and seeing my family and stuff but I really don't like that whole thing and it makes me really miserable.

Tyler: I hate it … It feels like wasted time.

Even those who did not mind commuting generally would have preferred not to do it:

> **Jamie:** I mean, obviously it takes time. It's time that I could be spending doing things. But it's a necessary evil … So commuting into an office is what it is and you've got to do it.

> **Oliver:** I guess I don't commute for the fun of it, if that makes sense, although I choose to cycle and run because it's much more enjoyable to do that commuting than sitting in the car or the bus … Making the most of the necessary evil, I guess.

Run-commuting, however, generally changed these perceptions for practitioners as hinted at in these quotes. In run-commuting at least, they found the gifts of travel time that helps bring value and productivity to getting home. While the gifts are wide-ranging, some crucial ones lie within the realm of experience and in particular relate to Jain and Lyons's (2008) identification of transition time and time out. Transition time is the need to experience distance and the opportunity for gearing up to the demands of destinations, for example to transition between work and home. Time-out on the other hand is travel's provision of personal time through a (possible) escape from the poles of work and homes, their demands and obligations. Both of these derive from the separation of work and home through commuting and was something felt palpably in run-commuting:

> **Carl:** I'm happy with some psychological distance [between work and home] and some effort needed to create some separation.

> **Holly:** And I think that's why the evening run-commute is my favourite, because that's the time that you can kind of unwind or think about the day, or think about what's happened. And then I get home and I feel like, "Okay, the work bit is over. Now it's like the fun bit or like the kind of evening bit." So there's a differentiation between the two and the run is like the little bridge between the two of them. I feel like I've almost kind of forgotten that I've been at work, which I think is quite nice.

As visible here, many run-commuters appreciate this separation as it allows for them to transition between work and home, between the different demands at each

location, and for them to compartmentalise these two spheres of life through running:

> **Callum:** I quite like that separation of work and home, so I like having a bit of time to kind of calm down from the day and switch over to home mode.
>
> **Oliver:** I think it's just a way to clear the head before and after work. It's just the way to clear the head, get active exercise and de-stress … So I think it also helps. You unravel the day's problems. And then by the time I get home, I'll have forgotten about work and what have you so.

The ability to transition between work and home, to not let the two bleed into one another either physically or mentally, was greatly appreciated by participants in the study and acted as an impetus for run-commuting. This is by no means unique to run-commuting and can occur in many commuting practices (see Edensor, 2011 on driving for example) but this was generally not in line with experiences of commuting by other modes for participants. Such benefits were also aided by the second key benefit of experiencing the separation of home and work through run-commuting, that being time out:

> **Mia:** I mean, to be honest, this is me time. I get to just sort of chill out, go for a run, enjoy some trees, say hi to the ducks, and then by the time I get home, I'm zen, rather than coming home and going, "I have had the worst day at work." It's just kind of, "Yeah, today was crap, but I had a really nice run, so winning" … I normally just kind of zen out. The thing I really love about running longer distances is it sort of replaces sitting meditation. I'm not really good at that, and it gives your body something to do, and then you can just sort of focus mostly, to be honest, on breathing. And it's just a really kind of soothing way to commute.

As seen in this explanation from Mia, the chance to have some time to oneself, free of the burdens of work and home, was welcomed enthusiastically by many run-commuters. In this way, run-commuting functioned once more in a meditative, restorative or therapeutic role, offering time out and resulting in improved experiences once arrived at home.

Through improved mental and physical wellbeing, and in experiencing transition time and time out, the positive post-run experiences reported by run-commuters in this study are central to understanding run-commuting. The experiential benefits

run-commuters gain from their practice are pivotal to the taking place of run-commuting and form major motivational forces to sustain run-commuting even if they did not necessarily catalyse it, especially when compared to other commuting experiences. Home spaces are where these benefits and their knock-on effects are most greatly felt and appreciated by run-commuters, which further positions the home as a significant space within run-commuting practices.

Logistics

While relationships and experiences may highlight the significance of home spaces due to the practices that intersect there, the spaces of home are also used to undertake elements of run-commuting practices. Notably here is the functioning of home as a key site of logistics and planning that help actuate run-commuting practices.

At multiple times in this thesis, logistics have been positioned as vital in producing run-commuting and in understanding the practice. Logistics is quite a loaded term within geography and mobility studies that belies its casual use in popular lexicon (Cowen, 2014a). It concerns the mundane movement of stuff; how goods and services are moved, managed and organised within systems. These systems have generally been military and capitalist, concerning getting supplies to the battlefront, managing the global organisation of trade, and increasingly crossing over in the securitisation of supply chains (Castree et al, 2013; Cowen, 2010; Cowen, 2014b). My use of logistics in this project does not have such military and capitalist connotations nor the science of circulation and calculative logics they embark on (Chua et al, 2018). The logistics under consideration in run-commuting are not the global scale movements and organisation of stuff productive of technologies, labours, landscapes, places and space (Cidell, 2012; Martin, 2013; Cowen, 2014a) but rather something more everyday. In applying logistics to social practices and everyday mobility practices, my focus concerns the mundane and daily management, organisation and movement of stuff that help accomplish mobilities. In run-commuting, it is a personal logistics rather than a system of logistics, generally performed by individual run-commuters who develop their own logistical competencies to manage the materials and movements of their practice, facilitating its taking place.

Despite my different emphasis here, a logistics approach to run-commuting practices still proves insightful. Logistics encourages a relational approach to the study of mobilities, attending to them as assemblages always in process that emphasises the vital connections between things. Tim Cresswell (2014) encouraged mobilities to engage with logistics in his third *Progress* review, attending to both how they build up but also break down (see Cresswell and Martin, 2012 and Lin, 2014 for excellent explorations of how mobility logistics break down). Crucially for this project, Cresswell has argued that logistical thinking combines considerations of mobility with ideas, things and people in ways that help to manage everyday lives (Merriman *et al*, 2013) and this is certainly my entry point into grappling with run-commuting logistics. This approach to logistics is reminiscent of Hägerstrand's (1970) time-space routines and its emphasis on humans accomplishing projects (such as a run-commuting journey or the co-ordination of everyday practices) and the movements necessary to realise these (see also Neutens et al, 2011). Ultimately, a focus on logistics, helps to foreground the hidden workings in the background of mobility and illuminating these are certainly essential in understanding how run-commuting happens and is produced.

Run-commuting is not only a practice involved in the logistics of everyday life for practitioners but it is also a practice that requires an often complex set of logistics to enable it. As such, logistics become integral to run-commuting practices, something that run-commuters are acutely aware:

> **Harriet:** Run-commuting … when you're going to do that you have to really think about it and plan it … doing it does require more thought because you have to figure out what am I going to wear, where am I going to leave my stuff, what do I need? …So there's all this like practical stuff around it.
>
> **Holly:** It's sometimes a thought process and sometimes like … I can like look at a day or look at the next day and kind of think, "Oh, I need to take my trainers," or, "I need to bring my bike," or, "I need to…" You know, the logistics of it.

These logistical skills and competencies are vital in developing, establishing and maintaining a run-commuting practice. Consequently, for many run-commuters, logistics and organisation are as much a part of run-commuting as the running or commuting:

> **Lisa:** It affects everything in my whole day, really. Because it affects what I put on in the morning, it affects what work I do at home, what work I do at work. So it's pretty much taken charge of everything.
>
> **Simon:** So does that organisation beforehand, is that part of the process?
>
> **Lisa:** Yeah, because if I haven't done it, I can't run-commute … having to be that organised, for me, is part of the run-commute.

Here we can see the centrality of logistics and planning to run-commuting. They are not only integral in making run-commuting happen but the skills and experience of it help form part of the practice itself. As such, logistics can also be a major barrier to the uptake of run-commuting. Some run-commuters I interviewed described an initial wariness about the logistics of run-commuting, which ultimately delayed them establishing a run-commuting practice:

> **Richard**: I guess that was something that put me off initially. I guess one of the big considerations was about carrying gear that I needed to work, because I would take my uniform to work in a rucksack and associated paraphernalia and how would I actually transport that—that was quite a big consideration.

While such logistical complexities are not unique to run-commuting, participants in this project described this as in some way different to their other commutes:

> **Sam:** It's not just run-commuting. Even if I'm going to work on the Tube, there's a certain amount of preparation involved: have you got any shirts and have you got everything ready? But I guess there's more to think about when I'm run-commuting than if I'm just jumping on the Tube because you've got to think about all your running gear and toiletries and you're going to change clothes twice, one at home, one at the other end. So there are more stages to consider. But I'm used to it because it's so similar to cycle commuting. I never cycled to work in a suit or work clothes. I always kind of wore scruffy stuff.

This demonstrates that while important, potentially troublesome and complex, the logistics and organisation of run-commuting are certainly possible to achieve and even become routine in some cases. Run-commuters who have experience of cycle commuting, such as Sam, generally reported an easier acclimatisation to such processes. Much of their learning was done during previous experiences of active

commuting where the logistical demand is closer to, albeit not equal to, run-commuting. This suggests some form of symbiosis between different active commuting modes.

Logistics are thus competencies practitioners develop throughout their run-commuting practices, becoming a constant consideration and constantly performed in their run-commuting. Logistics inform when run-commuting is performed and how the materials of it are successfully managed. Much of this logistical work takes place within home spaces and thus homes are crucial nodes within the logistics of run-commuting. All commuting and run-commuting combinations require stuff to travel between work and home as well as people and it is mostly in the spaces of home where this preparation, planning and organisation takes place, which this section explores in more depth.

Planning

Having established the centrality of logistics to producing run-commuting in the home space, and how this may differ from other commuting practices, the question remains of how these logistics actually play out in home spaces. To begin answering that, I first turn to exploring the temporalities of logistics planning, which pertains to when such logistics are undertaken. Speaking to run-commuters about this in the project, it became clear that there are multiple temporal rhythms that overlap and compete to ultimately structure logistics planning of run-commuting. Three broad rhythms can be identified. These decrease in temporal scale and relate to different considerations and practices. We will begin by looking at longer term planning.

Longer-term planning is a purposely ambiguous time-scale as it will be different durations for different run-commuters. This rhythm is mostly related to the temporal demands of running and the foundation that provides for run-commuting – i.e. the need to run. As seen in the last chapter, for some, running demands remain pretty constant and thus the longer-term planning consists of having a set number of runs they want to complete each week. For others, this longer-term rhythm is more changeable as running demands wax and wane over the course of the year. Most commonly taking the form of a training plan aimed at particular running events, these longer term plans provide the need to run and often are quite prescriptive about what needs to occur on each day, as seen in Dominic's practice:

> **Dominic:** Had this 18-week plan, and that's what dictated my plan moving forwards. So at the beginning of the season before I embarked on it, I sat down with the book and I said, "Let's map this out. So realistically, you can get in this many runs, these are the days and where you will be, so this means you will have to do this distance at least and the only way to do it is from the office or if it's a weekend you'll be in Wales or in Birmingham et cetera, et cetera." It required a bit of logistical planning, but by doing that planning it just made the whole thing quite seamless because once I got into the routine of it and I knew, "Right, okay, it's Tuesday, you're running from the office."

So running rhythms serve to lay the foundations and longer term planning for the production of run-commuting. They create the demand for running and the purposeful planning undertaken by run-commuters often dictates the precise temporal layout of these runs.

However, moving down a temporal scale brings these running rhythms more clearly in contact with competing demands from other practices of everyday life, such as work and home. There is a confirming or negotiation process that most run-commuters described as vital in how they manage run-commuting. This is most often done on a weekly basis and many run-commuters explained the logistical work they undertake at home, planning their run-commuting for the week:

> **Oliver:** At the start of the week, if I've got a training plan or if I have to do certain amount of runs that week, I'll be thinking when am I going to be running this week, and I'll be thinking that a week in advance or wherever. So on a Sunday I'll be like, "When am I going to run this week? What does my week look like? When can I fit it in?" And generally I'll come to a conclusion that says I will run-commute because I don't have much time … And also, as I say, if I am going out drinking after work on Friday, I'll tend to run-commute on a Friday morning because I don't particularly want to leave the bike at work. Even though it's secure, I like to have it at the house. So I would run to work, and then I would go out for a few beers after work and then get the bus back after that. And then at least I got my exercise in for that day.

> **Phillip:** [Run-commuting] is the kind of thing that makes you think ahead for the week. So you think, where am I going to have to travel, do I have

any late-night calls I'm going to have to do, are there days that I kind of want to run in?

This weekly planning undertaken by run-commuter is not only a clear process within the practice of run-commuting but it is where the sequencing of different practices comes most clearly into view. Different considerations of running, work, travel, socialising, leisure, transport and more are being negotiated by practitioners to either enable or constrain run-commuting on any given day. The priority given to these competing demands was shown in Figure 5.7.

As with all well-laid plans however, things can change. This is where the third planning rhythm – the diurnal rhythms comes into play. Given the centrality of planning and organisation reported by run-commuters so far, the idea of spontaneity within run-commuting may seem a little odd. Although, some run-commuters claim that run-commuting can be spontaneous and only be planned on the day:

> **Sienna:** Because I was taking everything back from work … I'd decide on the day. Like, I just take my gym stuff every day, and then if I ran home, I ran home. If I don't, I don't.

Rather than being an enabling factor as it is for Sienna, most run-commuters report the spontaneity of daily rhythms to be constraining to their run-commuting. Despite the work done to weekly plan their run-commuting, many participants reported needing to change their plans at relatively short notice:

> **Fiona:** I certainly try and [plan] it at the weekend for the week ahead, but then have to be a bit flexible if I suddenly get … called to a meeting, an important meeting on Thursday at 8 o'clock somewhere and I was planning to run in, then I'd have to re-work out how I'm going to do that run … And I guess so my default probably is run, unless I either don't need to run, I'm too tired to run, can't run, and then in which case my default would be cycle. And then if I can't do that, it's probably get on the Tube.
>
> **Sam:** I probably wouldn't run in if it was chucking down with rain. Although maybe I would.
>
> **Mia:** So if I'm not feeling [run-commuting] on a particular day, I just won't.

Here both external and internal constraining factors that would need logistics to be rethought on a daily basis are noted. External factors includes the vagaries of

weather and demands being placed upon run-commuters from elsewhere and other practices, while internal factors include fitness, injury and interest. These also demonstrate the multiple competing planning rhythms at play within run-commuting practices, from the longer-term to the weekly and the daily. Run-commuting is a highly planned practice where competing rhythms from the practices of work and home are navigated to enable and constrain run-commuting in different ways. These negotiations are most commonly undertaken within home spaces and thus homes are the primary logistics space within run-commuting practices. This extends beyond just planning for run-commuting however and much preparation for run-commuting also takes place within home spaces.

Preparation

As with many commutes, run-commuting is as much a practice of stuff moving as it is people. The encumbrance that stems from such mobile prosthetics (Bissell, 2009) and its implications on the experiences of run-commuting are explored in Chapter 10. Here, however, we focus on how these materials are prepared, which relates to getting the stuff of run-commuting ready and in order, rather than the thinking about run-commuting discussed above. While this is mostly done the day of or night before any run-commute, there is a key instance of run-commuting preparations that sits outside of this I would like to discuss first – stuff-only commutes.

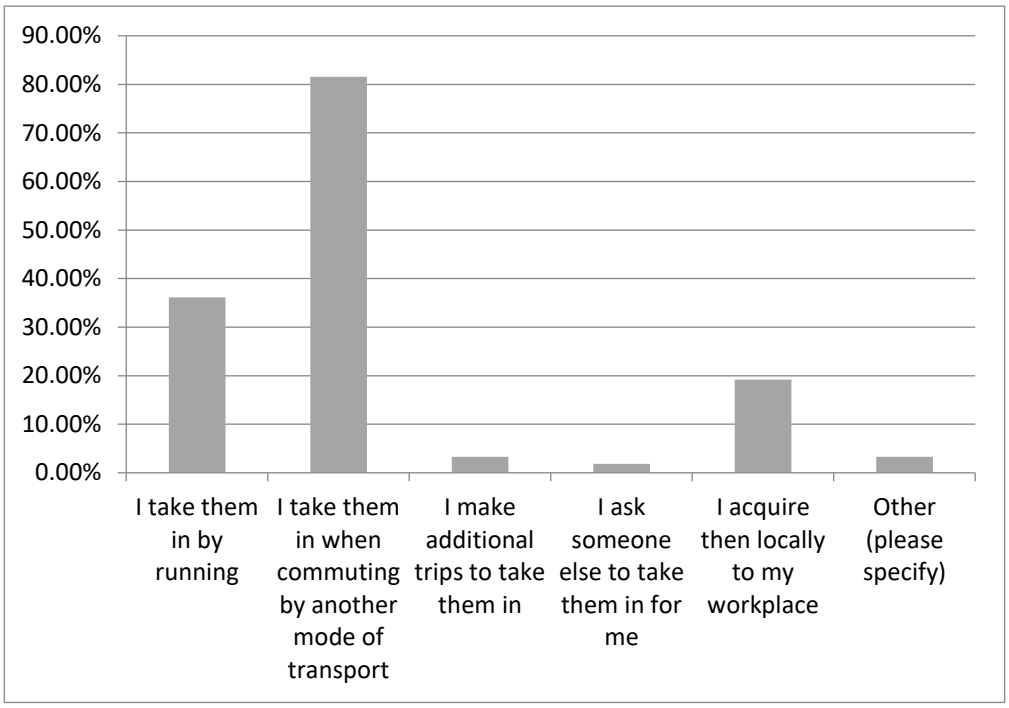
All commuters come with objects, accoutrements and encumbrances not only related to their journeys but with the spaces either end of their routes too. In this way, commuters are assemblages of bodies, machines, technologies and materials related to various spaces and places (Bissell, 2010a). Run-commuters are no different and often need to have materials with them that are not directly concerned with running. This can have a great impact on running experiences (explored more in Chapter 10) and thus the preparation that takes place helps to manage this. A dislike, impossibility or difficulty of running with all the stuff needed for run-commuting leads many run-commuters to stretch out their cargo needs and perform stuff-only commutes. By this, I mean that the stuff needed for run-commuting is transported to work by different means and in doing so, these journeys are performing a key component of run-commuting logistics, just not the running itself. This is preparation over a wider timeframe than it is normally spoke

about but a key step in the run-commuting process nonetheless. In essence, other forms of mobility in which it is easier to load-bear are being used to transport stuff in bulk resulting in a less encumbered run-commute:

> **Holly:** I keep work clothes at work and then on a Friday or a Thursday, whenever I had my bike, I would just take— So Monday morning, I would take everything in and then Thursday evening, I would take everything home, wash it and then Monday morning, take it in again. There's always going to be one [commute] in where I'm cycling and there's always going to be one out. So as long as I pack all my things then it's fine.
>
> **Fiona:** And now I pretty much don't use the Tube for work. I either run or I cycle, unless I'm going somewhere directly for a meeting and I need to be smart. Or I've got to take— You know, occasionally you have to take stuff back to work … So the redistribution of clothing. But probably once a week, for one reason or another, I'm not running in, and then I would consciously think, "Right, I need to get in 10 pairs of knickers, 5 pairs of tights and 2 or 3 tops."

While happening in different ways, visible in these quotes are the enmeshing of run-commuting patterns with wider patterns of commuting. Run-commuting is rarely something done every day, meaning many run-commuters are utilising the opportunities for load-bearing offered by their other commutes to help enable and accomplish run-commuting. This was also evident in survey responses, where most run-commuters testified to transporting the stuff kept at work via other modes of transport (Figure 7.1). Along with the storage capacity of workplaces (discussed in Chapter 8), a reliance is visible within the production of run-commuting upon other commuting modes and journeys. For many, run-commuting is not a self-sufficient mode of commuting and is only enabled by being complexed with other transport practices that provide spatial synchronicity of run-commuting materials. As well as stretching out the physical load of run-commuting, stuff only commutes also serves to extend the logistics of run-commuting. Enabling a run-commuting journey extends way beyond the life of that single journey itself and these stuff-only commutes feeds into the (often) weekly rhythms of preparation and planning that many run-commuters must undertake in order to produce their practice.

Figure 7.1 Cargo logistics of run-commuters



Such stretching out is also visible in the preparation that takes place within home-spaces for a single run-commute. Given the relatively involved nature of run-commuting logistics, most run-commuters interviewed in this project reported to generally preparing for their commutes the evening before:

> **Jamie:** The night before, I'll pack all my stuff except for the laptop which I always check in the mornings and then put into my bag. Well, I also have the iPad which goes with me as well, which I use to watch stuff and do work on the train. That stuff … as well as anything from the fridge gets packed in the mornings. But everything else gets set up beforehand. So I do that in the evenings.
>
> **Lisa:** I have to pack my bag the night before so I need to pull out the right running gear. I have a wardrobe with drawers at the bottom and one of the drawers is my running kit and it's like overflowing. It's really hard to keep it organised and it always gets mixed up. Like shorts gets in the tights bit and it's just chaotic. I've also got this smaller drawers in a different part of the wardrobe. And I did have one that was full of something probably quite vital, like socks or something. I was like, "No, this is now going to be for commuting." And so I kept in there just my 4 thermal tights, my 4 thermal tops, enough run socks and bras and stuff, and that was for my everyday

> packing the night before. It was like a separate thing just for that. And all my other running kit was in my drawer but I had this one… And that really improved my efficiency at packing the night before… I'd also do things like checking the weather the day before. So am I going to need thermals? What layering am I going to need? … That was really important.

So many run-commuters testify to developing routines at home around preparing for run-commuting the night before, and in some cases, even modifying their home spaces to make this easier. Two dominant reasons for this emerged from participants' interviews. Firstly, that preparing the night before makes the logistics a little easier and, secondly, that it helps with the commitment and motivation to run. Regarding making run-commuting easier, run-commuters explained this generally resulted in fewer mistakes being made:

> **Sam:** Sometimes if you're too knackered to [prepare] when you get in and you just think, "I'll do that in the morning," you kind of pay the price because you're kind of rushing around and you end up being late for work. So I'm not saying that I'm perfect. Often I'm doing it in the morning and I have to think, "Oh god." It's much nicer if you've done all that prep the night before and you can just go to your timetable in the morning. So generally speaking—I'll pack my bag beforehand and kind of almost visualise what I need to do when I get to work, like what clothes do I need to put on, because … there's been a few occasions where I've got to work, gone to get dressed and didn't have a towel, so got out of the shower and you're soaking wet, or don't have my shoes so I'm walking around wearing a suit and like some muddy trainers all day. Various different things that I've forgotten and it kind of really can upset the day and if you've got a meeting or something, it's a nightmare. So yeah, I do plan the night before: what way am I getting to work, how long is it gonna take, what will I need to wear on the run to work, what will I need to change into and do when I arrive at work?

In many ways, preparation the night before can be seen as a lubricant within run-commuting logistics. While everything may be possible without it, preparation the night before certainly seems to make things easier for run-commuters even if it does stretch out the logistics once more. As seen in these quotes, it ensures all the right stuff is where it needs to be, it ensures run-commuters are appropriately dressed, and it helps with timing and punctuality. This has some synergies to how

John Urry and colleagues have discussed mobile co-ordination (Larsen et al, 2008; Elliott and Urry, 2010). While their focus may centre on co-ordination with others in a mobile networked societies (say in organising a meeting), rather than the co-ordination between bodies and materials, their argument that co-ordination is a relational accomplishment is important. Run-commuters discuss a similar flexible and perpetual co-ordination between stuff, themselves and their movements in the accomplishment of successful run-commuting. Hence, it is very common for run-commuters to prepare clothes, bags, food, work-stuff and other essentials the night before at home, as well as double-checking the feasibility of run-commuting in regards to daily rhythms, such as weather. All of this is done to ease the process and prevent mishaps that can negatively affect the run-commute itself or the wider day. This is another way in which the logistical routines that take place within the home help to enable and produce run-commuting.

As well as these easing benefits, run-commuters also explained the commitment-making nature of such preparations, how packing the night before increased the likelihood they will actually run-commute:

> **Carl**: Yeah, I think [you] definitely [need] discipline. Discipline the night before to commit to do it. Have the kit laid out at the bottom of the bed. I'll make a pre-stated commitment … And it makes it easy, obviously.

This is further confirmed by Sam who explains that:

> **Sam:** There's been times where—less so at the moment—I've changed my mind and I got public transport. That would definitely [have been caused by] lack of preparation the night before. "Oh, I've got to get everything ready. I forgot my trainers, I forgot this, I forgot that," blah blah blah, and you suddenly realise that there's some fundamental thing that you need to do that day or that just makes it a bit easier to get the Tube in. But I think lack of preparation beforehand results in possibly chopping and changing plans.

Here we can see a fragility often apparent in run-commuting practices. The difficulties of perpetual, flexible, logistical co-ordination of run-commuting, of actually running the commute, as well as having alternative commuting options entails that it can be an easy thing to convince yourself not to do. I certainly did this on many occasion in my own practice. Such waxing and waning of interest or issues

in the logistics chain are just some examples of the daily planning rhythms than can spontaneously constrain run-commuting.

However, this is not to say that run-commuting *must* be prepared the night before. Some run-commuters spoke about preparing for run-commuting on the day:

> **Phillip:** I kind of have a little mental checklist in the morning, which probably everybody has, just to make sure I have everything I'm going to need on the other side. Deodorant, and did I pack socks that I can wear with work shoes, that kind of thing. I used to write it out; now I have it pretty much committed to memory.

A routinisation of these preparatory and logistical processes is apparent here. Also discussed by other run-commuters as helping to ease the organisation of run-commuting, regular run-commuters develop a familiarity with the perpetual and mutable logistics of their commutes. Such habits help to ease some of the complexities of run-commuting, enabling routines to be simplified and to occur with less preparation, as in Phillip's case.

Alongside planning for run-commuting, the various forms of preparation run-commuters undertake help to enable their practice and produce run-commuting. Whether spreading the physical load of transporting stuff, or the routines around preparing for single journeys, these preparatory and logistical processes are key elements in run-commuting practices and enable these journeys to take place. They navigate and synchronise the various material demands of the practices bundled with run-commuting as well as the embodied desires of runners. They also demonstrate the logistical load associated with run-commuting, which has the effect of stretching out the life of run-commutes so that they are influential and extant well beyond the duration of a single trip, impacting on journeys, days and times when run-commuting is not even taking place. This marks logistics as a key competence of the practice, something developed, refined and (sometimes) routinised within run-commuters practices, and in turn, this further identifies run-commuting as a distinct practice from other practices of running where such skills are not required. In essence, run-commuting is a practice managed and organised as much as it is enacted, and it is the spaces of home where this most often takes place.

Conclusion

This chapter sought to explore how the home acts a significant space within run-commuting practices, and the ways it helps to enable and constrain it in various ways. As both a physical site and an intersection of bundled everyday practices, the home was shown to be a key site of motivation and experience for run-commuting. Through the maintenance of familial relationships, the effective sequencing of demands related to these, and realising run-commuting's experiential benefits, home spaces serve as key incentives for the uptake and sustaining of run-commuting. It is in the home where the negative impacts of running's time demands are most strongly felt and where the alleviation of these through run-commuting are most clearly realised. As such, run-commuting is as much a practice of parenting, social relations and household management as it is running or commuting, and the household decisions that lead to run-commuting also demonstrate some of the politics of the practice, in particular a gendering which makes run-commuting less feasible for mothers. Home spaces are also key for hosting elements of run-commuting practices that take place there. Most notably, the everyday logistics that accomplish run-commuting through the management and movement of stuff related to the practice are undertaken at home. Run-commuting involves perpetual, flexible and often complex logistics that encompass processes of planning and preparation that enable run-commuting and stretch out its impact to bear influence way beyond the timeframe of a single journey. Crucial here, are the stuff-only commutes that spread the cargo-load of run-commuting across other commuting practices where encumbrance is less of an issue. This highlights the dependence run-commuting has on other commuting practices, where they complex together to successfully synchronise the materials and movements of run-commuting. Logistics and the logistical work that occurs primarily in home spaces are key aspects of run-commuting. They are competencies of the practice, which are developed, refined and occasionally routinised through repeated performances. As such, logistics also serve to demarcate run-commuting as its own practice with distinct elements and these skills are mostly honed in home spaces, positioning them as key spaces in the production of run-commuting.

Request Stop: Waypoints

The next space this Part will investigate for its impact on run-commuting practices is that of waypoints. Generally, these waypoints are transport intersections where practitioners who only run part of their commute switch modes. Waypoint are thus intersections where different transport practices are complexed in accomplishing a commute. However, these are not spaces all run-commuters experience as part of their run-commuting practices, with only 27.18% of run-commuters part-way run-commuting. Reflecting their discretionary nature and lower prominence in the research, this exploration of waypoints will be briefer, more of an interlude than a chapter, thus it's billing as a request stop.

That said, for those who do experience waypoints on their run-commuting journeys, they can be short but significant mobile spaces, affecting practices through material affordances and social encounters (Jensen, 2013). The waypoints of run-commuters are overwhelmingly train stations and carriages (see Chapter 6). Running and running bodies are not usual or anticipated activities or bodies in train travel. Although commonly and undesirably used in short bursts within public transport practices (Cook, 2017), meanings of running are rarely coupled with transport. In many ways it is alien in commuting practices that can have deadly consequences if misrecognised as highlighted by the killing of Jean-Charles de Menezes by London Metropolitan Police after running onto a Tube train in 2005 (Vaughn-Williams, 2007). Rather than a common transport decision, running in train stations is weird and incongruous, associated with danger and emergency (Cook, 2017). In combining running with train travel, run-commuters are not only negotiating a physical site not designed for them but also a social space where they are unexpected and their presence may be received with caution and alarm. Waypoints are also sites where run-commuters' multi-modality becomes more prominent. Here run-commuters also become rail patrons and can be replete with stuff with which to perform practices of passengering (Watts, 2008). How run-commuters negotiate these physical and social spaces, how their bodies cope with the change in mobility modes, how they manage their multi-modal assemblages and the wider impacts these considerations have on their run-commuting are key questions that will be explored briefly in the section but are worthy of further investigation.

To demonstrate the impact of train stations on run-commuting, I would like to present two vignettes, snippets of conversations I had with Malcolm and Lisa where they consider the enmeshing of train travel and running on a single journey:

> **Malcolm:** What I normally do, from home, even if it's really cold, I'll just run with a T-shirt. And then I'll put on a couple of base layers and a jacket just for the train journey so I'm warm when I arrive. Then I run back in the T-shirt and then that T-shirt gets discarded and then in my bag is a new T-shirt but then I'll have some other layers I can put on when I get to the train station. I hate to stay warm but I think it just makes it a little bit more pleasant for my fellow commuters … The morning run it's fine because it's such a short run, it's only 2 kilometres. 10 minutes and you're there. The evening run is a longer run and then it's the train. I'll pack stuff which is kind of sports gear which is kind of dry and clean, which I'll wear over my running stuff. That is still kind of gross once you're on the train but it's tough luck on my fellow commuters. To be honest, there's so many people doing the same kind of thing, either cycling or running. I've either got a jacket or a fleece on top of that, which means that it's not just me in my running clothes. There's something sort of over it. So I've got that … if I don't have that then I can get quite cold and even though the trains are really well-heated, you can lose heat quite a lot. I like to have some layers I can put on.

> **Lisa:** In the winter, I get to Charing Cross, I'm fine because I've been running. If I have to wait for my train, I get really cold. If I get straight on the train, it's kind of okay, and I sweat on everyone and everyone looks away. I warm up on the train. I get off at Catford Bridge. Body will not run because it's so cold and I'm wet from sweat and cold … But I usually peg it upstairs into the station. Quickly look at the board to see if there's a train. If there's a train, I'll leg it onto the train straight away. If the train's not leaving yet and I'm on like 4.9 miles, I might run up and down the platform… So then I get on the train, try and put my jacket on before I get cold, because once I'm cold I don't warm up again … So if I've unclipped my rucksack before I get on the train, people tend to just ignore me a bit. If I've still got my rucksack clipped on I shove my bum in a seat because otherwise someone else is going to get the seat and I'm trying to unclip myself and get my jacket out and put my jacket on, people are a bit like, "Nah." Especially

> because last year, the run-commutes were in the hotter weather, and so I'd get onto the train literally dripping in sweat, running down my face. Because I seem to get a post-running reaction. So I stop running and then my face just melts. And then people do look at you … If I've run and got straight on the train, that's a bit gross. I just live with the disgustingness. I have had people move away. Yeah, but I think that's fair enough, if there's another space. And quite often the train would be packed, people would be standing, but the seat next to me would be empty and I'm just like, "Fair enough."

These two vignettes demonstrate the range of considerations and experiences that feed into how run-commuters negotiate waypoints like train stations and carriages. Not only do run-commuters need to consider the configuration of their running and train travel, the logistics and materials necessary for this but they also take into account the bodily impacts of running and then stopping - the sweat, redness and changes of heat. Trains are not designed to moderate the temperature of recently stopped runners and actions are then considered about how practitioners want to manage this, for themselves and their fellow passengers. Extra stuff is being carried here to help make these journeys possible/comfortable/tolerable and while only clothing was mentioned in these vignettes, run-commuters also pack other things to do on the train journey, such as books, tablets and laptops, which have wider impacts of running with a larger load (see Chapter 10). Here we can see how the multi-modality of some run-commuters creates assemblages tailored to multiple spaces and practices but which may not be perfected for either.

Also evident in these vignettes is the idea that transitioning between running and other modes of transport can be simple but an intensely embodied experience. As such, some run-commuters discussed facilities they wished for at waypoints to help mediate this and produce more agreeable experiences for both themselves and those they share these spaces with:

> **Malcolm:** I think if there was a locker facility or a way of changing. Fortunately, it's quite a short commute, but I think that if you were very wet or it was pouring with rain, it'd be nice to have somewhere you can actually get changed, somewhere you could leave clothes because you can't all fit them in the bag.
>
> **Jamie:** There's very little at the train stations and the trains that really help. I'd love it if they had changing areas, something like that. I think part of my

> issue is, yes, some stations have bathroom facilities but I mean, you can't really get changed in those bathrooms facilities and you're paying an arm and a leg literally just for a loo. I mean, even the cheapest ones are maybe 50 pence, but usually, you're being charged a pound or £2 just to use the loo. So if there were more facilities at train stations and stuff, I'd definitely make use of it.

Within these quotes is the perception that waypoints and intersection do not really help with run-commuting currently. They are spaces negotiated by run-commuters who make do and try to stave off any of the negative aspects of multi-modal commuting through extra logistics-planning and stuff-bringing, as do others with multi-modal active commutes (Ravensbergen et al, 2018). Even with these in place, many multi-modal run-commuters described a train experience that is sensually overloaded with changes in bodily rhythms, heat and sweat creating sometimes less than desirable experiences, with knock-on effects to the sociality experienced with their fellow passengers. While many run-commuters find this a tolerable part of their practice, it is still an important element of run-commuting journeys and experiences and it is one many feel could be improved through the provision of more hard infrastructures at waypoints. In this regard, toilet, changing, locker and water facilities feature regularly alongside more quirky suggestions such the designation of a sweaty or active carriage on trains. These would help improve the physical, logistical, social and embodied experiences of run-commuting for those who have waypoints, which are perhaps the most significant considerations in understanding the impact these as spaces have on the production of run-commuting. Waypoints and their logistical, physical and social negotiation are important aspects of run-commuting practices that warrant further research. Lived experiences of multi-modal journeys have not received must attention in transport or mobilities research, and this marks another area where the study of run-commuting can make valuable contributions.

Chapter 8

Work

This chapter attends to spaces at the other end of the journeys explored so far, that of work. Work is another crucial space in the production of run-commuting practices. It is a significant node in the logistics of run-commuting, in the bundling of everyday practices and bookends practitioners' journey as both a space of arrival and departure. Similar to home spaces, work can also function as a space of motivation, logistics and experience. These are all crucial in enabling and constraining run-commuting and thus work spaces are vital to explore in understanding the production of run-commuting. In fact, work spaces are arguably more impactful in determining the possibilities of run-commuting, due to the inability of run-commuters to amend and customise these spaces as much as home spaces. Not only do they lack ownership over this space but they also need to share it with others, increasing the importance of social relations in these spaces. This chapter, therefore, will explore how work spaces serve to produce run-commuting primarily through discussions of the different cultures, rhythms and facilities found in workplaces.

Having positioned home spaces as the primary site of logistics and experiencing the benefits of run-commuting, these feature less prominently in this consideration of work spaces where the (im)materials affordances of these sites - in both their presence and absence – perhaps become more important. This is not to say that experiences in workplaces are not important in understanding run-commuting practices - they certainly are. For example, the experiential benefits realised in home spaces resulting from the transition time, time out and the physical and mental invigoration of run-commuting are also felt for those running to work. These are important to the practice and have added knock-on benefits in productivity (as is true for other active commuting modes too – Ma and Ye, 2019). However, as these perhaps aren't as pronounced as those felt and already explored in home spaces, this chapter will focus its attention elsewhere, notably towards the physical and social spaces of work.

The ensuing discussion in this chapter about the rhythms, cultures and facilities of work spaces thinks about these in two ways – as hard and soft infrastructure.

Mobility infrastructures are perhaps traditionally understood as the physical and relatively immobile 'moorings' of transit technologies that enable, channel, restrict, regulate and manage various flows and movements (Hannam et al, 2006). However, recent work has widened this definition somewhat. For example, work by Sheller (2009) on software and codes as infrastructure and Bissell (2015) on habit as virtual infrastructure have invited broader understandings of infrastructure as things capable of enabling, supporting and entraining movements, or constraining, restricting and limiting them, regardless of physicality or mooring. Under this more expansive conceptualisation, anything that works to carry movements akin to traditional infrastructure can be conceived of as infrastructural. Based on this understanding, I am drawing on the paired metaphors of hard and soft to analyse workplace infrastructures. These are metaphors used widely in a variety arenas, such as Murphy and Redmond's (2009) exploration of factors influencing creative classes in Dublin, Portugal-Perez and Wilson's (2012) discussion of trade and export reforms, Mann's (2012) policy analysis of supply chain logistics, and various studies looking at measures to reduce car use (see Cairns et al, 2008; Bamberg et al, 2011; Richter et al, 2011). The hard and soft metaphors are generally used to denote two broad categories of factors, measures, policies, provisions, or infrastructures that have different properties and may entrain or restrict in different ways.

Applying this useful dichotomous approach to work spaces of run-commuters, hard infrastructure can be thought of as the physical presences, measures and facilities in workplaces that enable and support run-commuting. In many senses, this aligns with more traditional understandings of infrastructure. Soft infrastructure functions in much the same way only it lacks the physicality and substance of hard infrastructure, rather being more intangible factors which enable and carry run-commuting, such as cultures and policies. This resonates with Bissell's (2015: p.132) exposition that the "carrying and cocooning" of bodies through habit "can be understood as a virtual infrastructure that augments the carrying work that physical infrastructures do". This is not to say that these softer measures are immaterial however. As Kinsley (2014) has argued, the virtual still has material characteristics, is expressed materially, and has material consequences. The same is true for soft infrastructure. As will be shown, the soft infrastructures of work spaces not only concern materials and entangle materials in their measures but also materially affect the practice, spatialities and movements of run-commuting. An analysis of soft infrastructures will begin this chapter as it seeks to explore how the spaces of work enable or

constrain, carry or impede, support or restrict run-commuting practices in different ways.

Soft infrastructure

As suggested above, soft infrastructure in this project relates to the more intangible factors that help enable and entrain run-commuting, things that lack a physical presence and that cannot really be touched. Discussions with run-commuters in this project revealed a variety of different soft infrastructures within the workplace, which help enable their run-commuting. Broadly, these fall into the categories of workplace policies, workplace cultures, and workplace rhythms. It is important to note that not all run-commuters had all of these provisions, nor are they all necessary for run-commuting, many practitioners do so despite the infrastructural offerings, but these are common aspects run-commuters discussed as being useful or enabling in their own practices.

Workplace Policies

Different workplace policies were reported by run-commuters in this project as enabling to their run-commuting. Laying out expectations, responsibilities and rights, policies at workplaces helped lay the groundwork of feasibility for many run-commuters. Two policies in particular were regularly discussed – flexible working hours and dress codes. Although enshrined in UK law that all employees have the legal right to request flexible working (Flexible Working Regulations, 2014), not all run-commuters have specific flexible working policies in place at their work and others are likely to have has their requests denied (Chartered Institute for Personnel and Development, 2019). The majority did – formally or informally – however, and this often proved valuable in enabling their run-commuting practices:

> **Fiona:** That flexibility means that if I want to do a short run and be in by 8, I can be because the office is open; I can do that. Equally, if I want to do a long run … Like this morning I got in about 25 past 8. I wasn't really showered and changed until quarter to 9, but that's fine too. So probably just having that flexibility around helps.

> **Phillip:** That's just how things work here, that some people are gonna get in a little bit early because they run or cycle in and some people are going to leave a little bit early because they run or cycle in, and that's just part of the culture … Mine depends, actually. It depends on the season how I come in. [In the summer] it's light so early and it's getting kind of warm, so I may run in at 6 … and at my desk by 7:30 … and then leave whenever I want to leave. In the wintertime, it might be 9:30 before I come in because it's so dark.

While many run-commuters aim for some degree of punctuality and regular working patterns, visible here are the multiple ways in which flexible working hours prove valuable to run-commuters. In many ways, it helps nullify any of the risks or issues that may be associated with run-commuting as a transport mode. Run-commuters attested to it providing a buffer for any increased journey times, for the increased time needed to transition from commuting to working, as well as for the vagaries of interest and fitness they may experience. However, the flexibility offered by an adaptable start time also enables run-commuters to tailor different running experiences, by changing the distance ran or responding to the changing climate and light levels for example. In these multiple ways, flexible working policies prove enabling to run-commuters. This is, however, not a policy that can be uniformly applied to all industries and jobs. According to the UK Working Lives Survey (Chartered Institute for Personnel and Development, 2019), higher level and higher skilled jobs are more likely to have flexible working arrangements, whereas they are less abundant in lower skilled and customer facing jobs. The high presence of those working in banking, finance and education within this study demonstrates such industries where this privilege can be more readily taken advantage of.

The second main workplace policy deemed effective in enabling run-commuting is that of the dress code. As a factor, this recognises the assemblage of run-commuting practices. They are not just runners, but runners who also have a whole workday to do at the start or end of their run. Dress and clothing in workplaces are important. They are not just simple outfit selections but rather play crucial roles in identity expression, performance and social relations (Sklar and DeLong, 2012; Ainsworth, 2013). Workplace dress can affect perceptions of professionalism, friendliness, intelligence, authoritativeness, competence, and creativeness among a whole host of other traits (Cardon and Okoro, 2009; Furnham et al, 2014; Gurung et al, 2018). People are judged on their dress and this is a gendered affair. Women

are not only more likely to be judged on their appearance but also judged in a sexualised manner, variously somewhere between too provocative and too frumpy (McDowell, 1997; Howlett et al, 2015). Worth (2016) argues that dress is a practice of work identity, and is one that women seemly have to work harder at (Howlett et al, 2015). As such workplace dress requirements featured heavily in run-commuting considerations. Not only are they contending with the above considerations but are adding logistical and embodied factors on top. In run-commuting, clothes are also things that may need to be transported and which can have a big impact on run-commuting (see Chapter 10). Again, while not universal, a more casual dress code was reported by run-commuters as helpful to their practice:

> **Harriet:** The dress code is very, very informal, sometimes I just go in and work in my Lycra or I can take it in and then change obviously, but like there's totally the flexibility to do that and I found it really satisfying when I did it. And it saved a little bit of time.

> **Phillip:** In this office, I can dress a lot more casually than I did before … One thing that's just changed a lot and I think has helped a lot of people run or cycle in is just the business environment's just a lot more casual than it used to be. So in the same company I work for now or have worked in, when I was in Washington, it was a suit everyday and a tie every day
>
> **Simon**: So do you think you could have run-commute in that environment?
>
> **Phillip:** No, the logistics would have been hard … No shower, more formal work environment. Those two factors alone would have made it almost impossible.

For run-commuters then, a more casual workplace dress code and the diminution of dress-based judgements that accompany it, can help to ease the logistics involved in transporting clothes on the commute too. In some cases it can make it unnecessary to bring different clothes at all, as explained by Harriet, and for others, it can negate the need to bring more difficult clothes by running. This difficulty can arise both by being more cumbersome than casual clothes or from attempting to keep clothes smart and crease-free on the run (discussed further in Chapter 10). Both of these demonstrate how workplace dress codes can serve to enable and entrain run-commuting. Particularly noticeable in Phillip's explanation, this is one aspect of the soft infrastructures of workplaces more recent and again may not be

possible in all industries. This said, many run-commuters also recognised that this casualness may not be appropriate at all times either:

> **Holly:** If I'm meeting clients, then I will wear a shirt and some nice trousers and better shoes, and you generally know those ahead of the day so I'll be cycling in on those days to take that. So yeah, I guess that kind of influences the run-commute a bit.

These quotes echo Cardon and Okoro's (2009) sentiments that people generally prefer dressing down in the workplace but understand the value in dressing up, especially when seeking to form positive impressions with clients, customers and colleagues. So flexibility is often needed here, particularly with meeting the expectations of those outside of the workplace run-commuters may have to interact with. The difficulties faced attempting to combine smarter dress with run-commuters often leads to many opting not to run on a day more formal wear is required, as seen in Holly's quote.

Here we can see how dress requirements can influence run-commuting, however, the reverse was more common among participants in this study with their run-commuting dictating their dress and many have developed specific routines around clothing to fit with their run-commuting:

> **Lisa:** Dress code is we can wear jeans and things like that. But I can only fit in my bag in the winter a dress. If I wear trousers and a top, it doesn't fit nicely … so I'm always freezing. But pretty much if I wear a dress, I can fit it all in and it is not ridiculously heavy … and now literally I've worn the same 3 things in rotation for nearly a year now because they fit really well in my bag.

> **Sam:** I wear smart clothes actually as part of my run-commuting, really, because it's quite easy to keep a suit at work. It just hangs up. Suit, shoes, go in with some shirts, and it's a lot easier to do that than to wear casual clothes and think, "Well, what am I going to wear today?" Because you can wear a suit more times. Like, you can wear a jacket all week, whereas if you wore the same casual clothes all week, people are like, "What's going on? He's wearing the same clothes every day." So yeah, the dress code's pretty chilled out, but I tend to wear a suit because it fits in better with run-commuting.

The importance of dress to run-commuting, and vice versa, is evident here. Participants in this study described attempting to fit their work clothes to their run-commuting as best as possible, while still meeting the (increasingly casual) dress expectations of their workplace. While for the majority, this results in a more casual work attire that is lighter, more compact, more portable and less likely to be negatively affected by the motion of running, for Sam, this resulted in actually dressing more smartly, and in turn, reducing the cargo load he faces on his run-commute. Common across both approaches however, is the sense of routines being developed, of different permutations being experienced and refined to result in a sustainable work clothes routine that fits with practitioners run-commuting. As an example of soft infrastructure, workplace dress codes not only enable run-commuting for some in their casualness but, importantly, demonstrate the beyond-run affects and effects of run-commuting. These are vital considerations within run-commuting and feed into the complex logistics of the practice that practitioners navigate.

Workplace Cultures

Beyond specific workplace policies, where expectations are generally written down and consultable, workplace cultures also function as an important enabler of run-commuting but are generally not codified. Rather, they emerge from the social and material relations within workplaces, which coalesce to produce atmospheres of acceptability for run-commuting. Atmospheres are an affective dimension, crucial to understanding how we experience life in spaces (O'Grady, 2018). As is their nature, atmospheres are not easy to pin down but have variously been explained as a form of aura, tone, quality and sense of place (McCormack, 2008; Anderson, 2009; Closs-Stephens, 2016). They are the distributed and evanescent yet sensed and palpable "moody force fields" (Amin and Thrift, 2013: p.161) of immersion that form the ubiquitous backdrop of everyday life (McCormack, 2008; Bissell, 2010b). Atmospheres emerge in process, never being finished (Anderson, 2009). They are continuously produced, deformed, reproduced and circulated by pre-personal relations between bodies and things that affect our sense of place and form a sensate background to life (Urry, 2007; Bissell, 2010b; Latham and McCormack, 2017; O'Grady, 2018). As such, atmospheres "seem to fill the space with a certain tone of feeling like a haze" (Bohme, 1993: pp.114) that affect the felt materiality of spaces

and give them distinctive qualities, which bodies have capacities to affect and be affected by (Anderson, 2017 Latham and McCormack, 2017). These are not just inert backgrounds however. Atmospheres are forceful and full of potential, affecting what people do and feel is possible. Bissell (2010b: p.273) suggests it is instructive to consider affective atmospheres as a propensity, "a pull or a charge that might emerge in a particular space which might (or might not) generate particular events and actions, feelings and emotions". As such, affective atmospheres facilitate and restrict practices differently and are therefore "a crucial part of the everyday infra-structural materialities" of life (Latham and McCormack, 2017: p.370). This understanding of atmospheres fit within our conceptualisation of soft infrastructure, which carry with them a range of affective possibilities that open up opportunities (Conradson and Latham, 2007). My contention here is that run-commuting may be one opportunity opened up by the affective atmospheres in workplaces. In essence, regardless of any policies permitting it, run-commuters need to feel comfortable arriving or departing work by running, and to feel that they will not be negatively judged for doing so. This could be considered an atmosphere of acceptability around run-commuting, where pre-personal relations between bodies and things emerge to encourage and support run-commuting rather than restrict it. In this sense, the cultures of work spaces discussed below, and the pre-personal, social and material relations they involve, contribute to the processual and atmospheric enabling of run-commuting.

While multiple and unique to each workplace, a significant culture reported by many run-commuters was a strong exercise and physical activity culture:

> **Holly:** Because of what we do and I think the nature of it [active transport consultancy], there are a lot of cyclists and there are a lot of runners. I mean, we've got quite a few run-commuters, so it's just seen as a normal thing.
>
> **Phillip:** There's always people doing stuff, either running or triathlons or other outdoor stuff. So it's an easy environment to get involved with that. There are different running clubs within the company, yes. So it's a pretty easy… You're not cutting against the grain by being part of that, and if you send a note out now saying, "Does anybody want to go for a run?" you'll probably get 4 or 5 people would say they were up for it. That's a supportive thing and it makes it a lot easier… I would say, culturally, I think it's important to have a culture that supports that … I think that's a real

feature for attracting a younger workforce. And then having a physical infrastructure to support that kind of lifestyle.

Lisa: It's slightly changed because we had a new boss a couple of years… 18 months ago. And he's a runner so that has changed the dynamic slightly of how people think about it and how people express their own fitness beliefs in the department. Before, we had a really unfit, fat, nasty boss, and now we've got a tiny, skinny, very particular about what he eats, runner boss … But so that has really sort of changed things. So people talk about doing active things more. But he doesn't run-commute or anything like that.

The cultures of workplace physical activity discussed above, whether on or beyond commute activity, demonstrates the impact it has on enabling run-commuting by producing atmospheres of acceptability, where run-commuting is not opposing "an atmosphere" and its suggested "directions for how to behave in a social setting" (Edvardsson et al, 2003: p.378). For many, run-commuting is not something out of place at their work. Physical activity is not only talked about but also done and encouraged in some workplaces, which in turns creates a familiarity with sweaty, Lycra-clad bodies in such spaces, which are seen as laudable or even desirable rather than anything else. Some participants saw the recent rise of cycling to work as influential here. Cultural norms and the collective feelings and atmospheres they contribute to have also been shown to impact on cycling practices. Cycling's perception as a leisure or transport practice and whether it is seen as a normal way to commute or not affects people's inclination to cycle (Daley and Rissel, 2011; Aldred, 2013; Aldred and Jungnickle, 2014; Handy et al, 2014). Therefore, the recent rise of cycle-commuting has served to cement it as a norm in places, in turn, increasing the likelihood of someone cycle-commuting. While there is a recognition that run-commuting may be more peripheral within these activity cultures, many run-commuters remarked that it is generally seen as a good thing by their workplace and highlighted the importance of such cultures in producing run-commuting.

However, as noticeable in Lisa's quote above, these cultures and atmospheres are mutable and in particular, the affective capacities more senior colleagues within workplaces can have on these was significant. This was also reflected by others in the study. In particular, those participants who themselves held seniority within the workplace spoke about the impact they felt they had in helping to make run-commuting and its affects culturally acceptable:

> **Fiona:** I guess it comes back to being the Chief Exec in terms of because I do it and other people see it's fine to arrive hot and sweaty and shower and take a bit of time— So it's just normalising that a bit. So that hopefully means that people think that they can … run in.

There is a sense here of leading by example, that the more senior members of an organisation can help create a culture of physical activity and to normalise things like run-commuting where practitioners feel it is acceptable to do. While all bodies have the capacities to affect atmospheres, these are differentiated capacities and at different times and different places, different bodies can be more affective than others. For the most part, the participants in this study reported generally positive reactions from employers and colleagues to their run-commuting, ranging from curiosity and disbelief to admiration and interest. This demonstrates the role of workplace relations, cultures and atmospheres have on making run-commuting acceptable, helping to enable the practice. I am wary that having only interviewed current run-commuters, examples of where such cultures and atmospheres deem run-commuting unacceptable have been missed. While some run-commuters in this study proclaimed to run-commute in spite of an unsupportive workplace culture, others may find this a more difficult barrier to overcome. A desire or need for harmonious working relations sets workplace acceptability as a key consideration for run-commuters, and the presence of an extant active culture certainly enables this. While run-commuting may still be peripheral within active cultures in workplaces, the growing acceptability of cycle-commuting, presence of workplace running clubs and gyms extends this atmosphere to run-commuting and helps to make the practice possible in practitioners' eyes.

Workplace rhythms

The final category of workplace soft infrastructures is that of rhythm. There are various key rhythms that occur in the workplace, which influence run-commuting, notably here are those that relate to the body and to the mutability of workloads. These function in ways which motivate, enable and constrain run-commuting, and as such, are part of the complex considerations involved in making run-commuting happen.

The first rhythm of particular note is one that often motivates run-commuting and physical activity more generally. It relates to the rhythms of bodily activity and inactivity throughout the work day and the impacts this may have on their body and desire for run-commuting. As highlighted in Chapter 5, run-commuters often work in office-based professions and this leads to a certain levels of sedentariness in the workplace:

> **Jamie:** So a lot of my day is spent at the desk, but most days I'll have at least 1 if not 2 meetings with various other members of the team. So I will be moving around within the office. I also tend to try and break my day up so I have a morning session and an afternoon session. And at lunchtime, every day I make a point of getting out of the office for half an hour. Just going out, sort of wandering around, being away from my desk … But it's just to make sure that I do move about.

> **Mia:** I spend a great deal of time looking at spreadsheets and trying to stop the country from breaking and not having any internet ever. I work for an internet provider and it's just a regular old resource planning job, which involves looking at spreadsheets and going, "Oh look! A number. Oh, look! Another number. This one's a different colour. That's probably bad." It's not the most interesting job in the world. So day-to-day then, I am mostly just trapped at a desk.

Visible here is the relative sedentariness of workers' bodies that, for some, is less than preferable and creates a desire for movement to combat such inactivity (see Chapter 10 also). While many try to build some form of movement throughout their day, it can also directly feed into the desire to run, and more specifically, run-commute, as Fiona demonstrates:

> **Fiona:** I can spend quite a lot of time sat down, so it's [run-commuting] definitely something I … find valuable.

While bodily rhythms in the workplace can serve to motivate run-commuting, other rhythms help to actuate it through enabling or constraining the practice. One such rhythm is the fluctuation of workloads over the year. Many participants in the study described different intensities in their workload across the year:

> **Tyler:** Occasionally it might be a little more demanding in the computer game industry [if] … a release coming up, basically … there is a regular

cycle. The releases are actually only annually at the moment. It used to be bi-annual. Twice a year.

Lisa: Okay, so I have two phases to the year. I have autumn and spring terms where I teach 3 nights a week from 4 till 6. It's very intensive teaching … it's very active and I'm absolutely exhausted at the end of it … So, the summer term is really different. The summer term is lots of daytime meetings, lots of marking, and so the commuting will be very different. So I'll be leaving in the afternoon rather than in the evening. So there'll be heat issues and things in the summer and last year, my run-commuting kind of petered out.

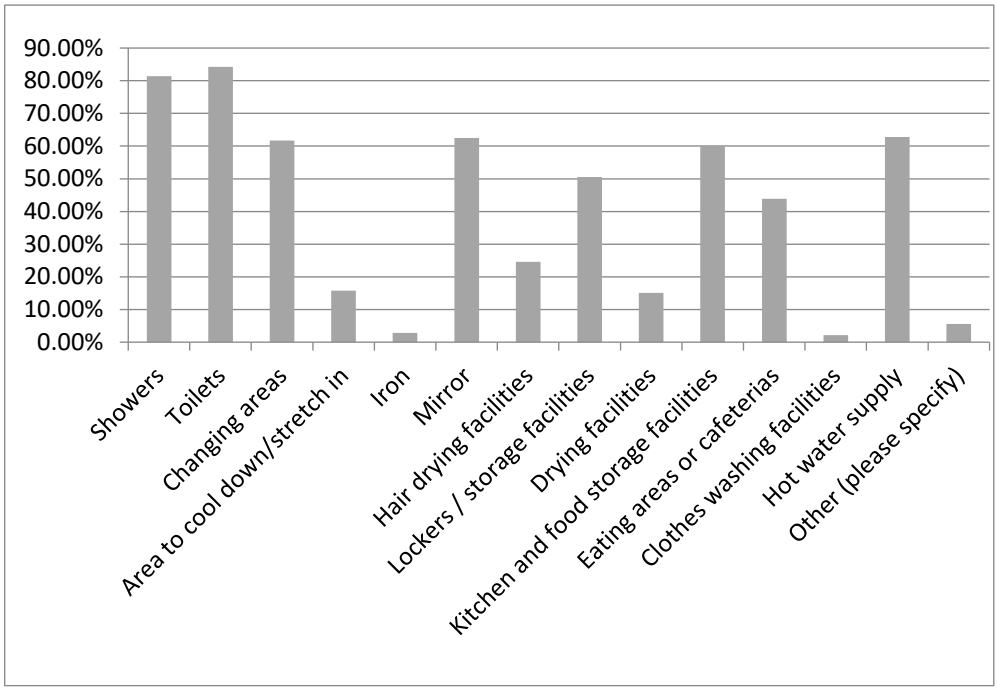
Work and run-commuting are complexed practices. They rely on each other for sequencing and synchronisation. In these quotes we can see how these rhythms of practices intersect, how changes in one cause ripples in the other as its shifts or attenuates to accommodate a new sequencing. The seasonality and rhythms of workloads reported here increase and decrease demands from work across the year. This, in turn, can enable and constrain run-commuting in different ways. Increased work pressures can decrease time for run-commuting and constrain the practice, but conversely, lighter workloads can constrain run-commuting by creating less desirable running conditions, for example, as seen in Lisa's quote. Workload fluctuations also relate to wider rhythms, which in turn, become implicated in the production of run-commuting practices. Visible above are the impacts of rhythms pertaining, to education, to climate and to computer game releases which become bundled in the production of run-commuting practices. While the effects may be unique to individuals, the rhythms of workloads and the wider rhythms that influence them have a clear impact on carrying or limiting run-commuting. Due to this, the rhythms of workloads feature heavily within the rhythms of planning highlighted earlier in Chapter 7. The predictability or spontaneity of these workload fluctuations are also important however, being significant in which of the planning rhythms (identified in Chapter 7) – longer term, weekly or daily - the demands of work can be taken into account and the implications for run-commuting known. Discussion with participants suggest there may be some privileges at play here. Those with more autonomy over their workloads (likely those more senior in an organisation) have more opportunities to create predictability that can better entrain run-commuting.

Together, workplace policies, cultures and rhythms form some of the most significant soft infrastructures in work spaces for run-commuters. Some function to motivate and enable run-commuting, such as flexible working hours, casual dress codes, cultures of physical activity, atmospheres of acceptability, sedentariness, and predictability, while others function to constrain, such as irregular workloads and spontaneity. Together they serve to demonstrate some of the intangible factors in work spaces that have material consequences on run-commuting and some of the key measures that could enable it. The ones discussed in this section have emerged from specific efforts on part of employers, as a result of coalescing rhythms, and the ephemeral emergence of atmospheres through social relations in workplaces. While it is unlikely any single run-commuter will experience all of these measures, they are the most common ones discussed in the research. They also further demonstrate some of the privileges of run-commuting. Not all jobs and roles can offer such measures and those which can, are evident in the demographics of current run-commuters. Attempting to extend the reach of some of these soft infrastructures to other industries would be beneficial if trying to enable run-commuting more widely.

Hard infrastructure

Alongside the soft measures discussed in the above section, there are a variety of hard infrastructural provisions that are crucial to enabling run-commuting. Rather than intangible measures, the infrastructure discussed in this section have a physicality to them and probably align most closely with common perceptions of what infrastructure and facilities are. In run-commuting, the physical facilities in work spaces are major enabling and constraining factors, both influencing the feasibility of run-commuting at all and the characteristics it takes on. This section explores some of the most significant hard infrastructures run-commuters reported as influential in their practice, for better for worse. As can be seen in Figure 8.1, there are a vast variety of facilities run-commuters report to use at work with different incidence. Following interviews with run-commuters in this study, two hard infrastructures emerged as most influential in enabling or restricting their practices – showers and storage.

Figure 8.1 Prevalence of workplace facilities for run-commuting



Showers

By far the most important hard infrastructure in enabling and producing run-commuting are showers. While also important for other active commuters (Wardman et al, 2007; Lee, 2016), it is perhaps a more pressing concern for run-commuters seeking to run to work. Running is a more physically exertive mode of transport than cycling or walking and generally produces hotter, sweatier and smellier bodies. Despite the casualisation of the workplace discussed in the previous section, sweat is still often socially undesirable in these spaces. While in exercise cultures sweat may illustrate self-care and athletics ideals (Waitt, 2014), in work spaces, particularly white-collar ones, sweat is embedded in different symbolic registers (Waitt and Stanes, 2015; de Vet, 2017). The sensations of sweat – the sight, touch and smell of it - are often pathologised, seen as going against workplace etiquettes and the "social and gendered norms regarding professional work appearance" (Lee, 2016: p.415; Hitchings, 2011; Waitt and Stanes, 2015). In essence, there can be many pitfalls of being sweaty at work (Hitchings, 2010), which run-commuters seem acutely aware of. Among the many strategies that are often adopted to manage and prevent sweat in workplaces (see Waitt and Stanes, 2015;

de Vet, 2017) run-commuters' desire for a post-run shower is a significant one, for their colleague's benefits as well as their own, positioning the shower a key infrastructural decider in run-commuting practices:

> **Fiona:** Well, I couldn't run to work and not shower. I mean, I would do it the other way around … I think just how I feel about it, to be honest. I couldn't imagine— I've never really considered doing that. Particularly, probably this time of the year [winter] you might get away with it because you just don't sweat quite so much, but in the summer, I literally am completely dripping in sweat so the thought of not being able to have a proper wash … you could just about get away with it on a cycle but I don't think it would work for a run.
>
> **Richard:** I think if I didn't have access to showers, I don't think that a baby wipe wash would be entirely feasible and wouldn't be sufficient because I do spend a lot of the day working with people [in healthcare]. It's not like I can just, I don't know, sit in my own filth all day in the corner of an office somewhere. Like, I'm working with people and working with colleagues quite close by as well.

The importance run-commuters place of showers as a necessary provision for running to work relates to bodily changes that occur during running and desires for the day ahead, including comfort, hygiene and social harmony. We can also see here narratives of self-disgust, -respectability and –consciousness that sweaty bodies are often tied up in, as well as fears of being negative judged for this at work (Waitt, 2014; Waitt and Stanes, 2015). For many, this is a key enabler in run-commuting routines but is not just about the presence of showers, the quality and quantity of them are also important:

> **Carl**: The facilities at my previous work were worse, so there was a bigger disincentive. There was 2 showers, 15 other people. So if I arrived deliberately late, like 9:45 or something, I could use them, but otherwise I'm just like… It's not worth standing in a queue. It was too embarrassing standing in the corridor, yeah.

As hinted at in this quote, the experience of using the showers are just as important as the provision of them in enabling run-commuting or otherwise. A few participants in the study opted not to use workplace showers even if they existed. Some considered the time implications of needing to shower, change and transition

from commuting to working too great to be worthwhile. Others, such as Phillip, used other shower provisions for reasons of quality, quantity and social acceptability:

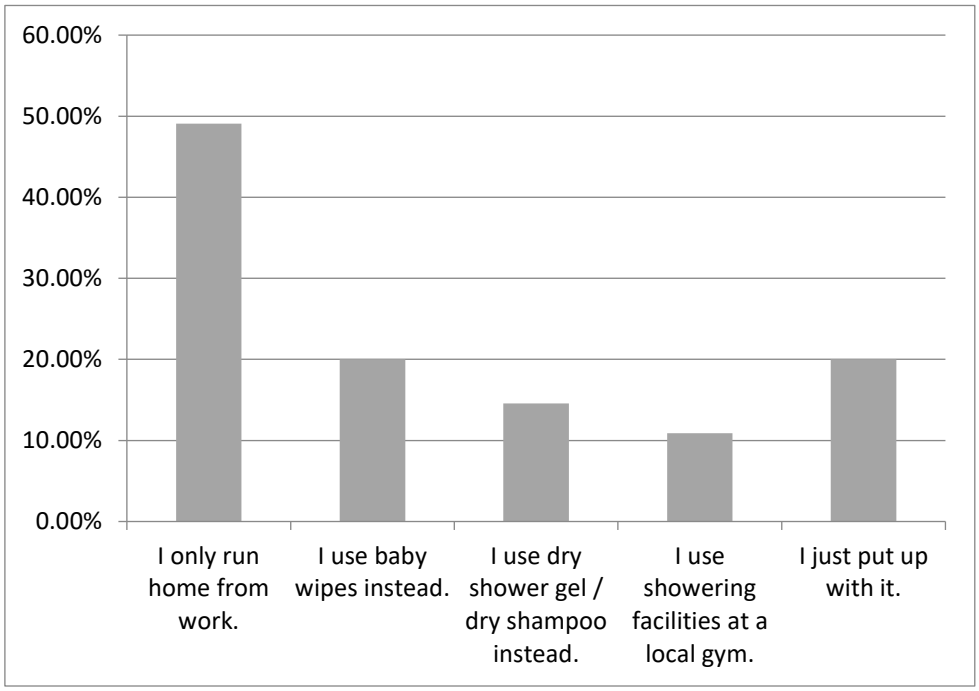
> **Phillip:** I use the shower at the gym just by London Bridge.
>
> **Simon:** Why don't you shower at work?
>
> **Phillip:** Too crowded, you'll wait. Plus, it's just a better facility. This [work] is like bootcamp. And these are colleagues. It's one thing to run with colleagues, but being naked, no … I thought if I can avoid [work showers] I would because it would enable me to keep running. If I couldn't avoid that then I might not run anymore … Downstairs, you might wait 15 or 20 minutes for something to clear up. So there's that. Then there's just the awkwardness of sitting around, waiting for a shower with people you work with—it isn't all that fun.

Showering, thus, is not just a purely functional part of the run-commuting experience. Showering itself needs to be a good experience, that doesn't take too long, avoids awkward social encounters at work and be of high enough quality in order to enable run-commuting to work. If these conditions are not met, then they become constraints to run-commuting for some practitioners and others will seek alternative provisions.

There were 18.6% of respondents to the survey who did not have workplace showers (Figure 8.1) and it was common among interviewees not to have or use such facilities. The question then beckons, as to what do run-commuters do if this crucial hard infrastructure is not provided or desirable. An overview of answers from the survey is given in Figure 8.2, but broadly they fall into four categories: continuing regardless, using alternative provisions, altering running intensities, and only run-commuting home.

A contingent of run-commuters who lack shower facilities, 20% according to the survey, simply put up with it. This was more common among men which ties into the gendered constructions of sweat as a masculine trait, where it is more socially acceptable for men than women to sweat and smell in public spaces (Osborne and Grant-Smith, 2017). While perhaps not ideal, there is a sense that the bodily effects of running are not too bad that they can't be tolerated for the day ahead:

Figure 8.2 Eventualities of lacking shower provision



> **Lisa:** I did it [run-commuting with no shower] the other day just to try. If I'm going into work just to meet my immediate colleagues, so not like for a posh meeting or something, then I don't mind so much turning up kind of red and sweaty and having a meeting. And I assume they don't mind too much, but I wouldn't be able to do it if I had to get changed into work clothes and then do other things. So if I'm just going in for something fairly informal and I can stay in my running kit and then run home again, then it's fine.

Most in this scenario, however, do not consider this acceptable and have other routines in place. One such possibility is to find other washing provisions. While some use showering facilities elsewhere, such as a gym, others develop different washing routines such as using baby wipes or dry shower products which do not require a shower and can be done within the extant provisions in work spaces. Of the survey respondents who lacked shower facilities, 34.55% opted for non-shower-based hygiene routines but for some, this is not suitable or effective enough considering the bodily effects of running, particularly at certain times of the year:

> **Simon:** So is a baby-wipe shower not an option?

> **Lisa:** It's all right at some times of year, but if like my hair's been all sweaty, then you can't baby wipe your head. And I prefer to feel sort of fresh … but you don't feel clean and professional with a baby-wipe shower. You feel slightly less smelly and like you've made an effort but nothing really happened. So yeah, I want a proper shower if I'm gonna [run-commute to work].

Others manage their shower-based predicaments by managing their running on the commute. In particular, Sam discussed the tempering of his effort on the commute in order to reduce the bodily effects of running:

> **Sam:** At my current work, I don't have a shower. So I run to work at recovery pace, very light-paced. I don't even break into a sweat. I get to work and I just go to the bathroom and just dry myself off and put my— I keep some clothes at work and just— So I have a shower before I go, get ready and then I'm just ready to get changed at work. I don't have any kind of body odour problem, basically. Just wet wipes. And it's worked out really well, actually. It's almost been a revelation and it was a real palaver having a shower.

Here, by staving off the worst of running's effects on the body by running slower, Sam is able to more successfully use the other washing routines at his disposal in lieu of a workplace shower. He also found additional benefits in easing the logistics of run-commuting routines in doing so. It should be noted, however, that such an option is most likely a privilege of Sam's running capabilities. He is able to run the distance to work at a slow enough speed that he does not break into sweat yet is still time-effective in getting to work. This is unlikely to be an option for all.

Much more commonly in altering running patterns to deal with lacking shower provisions is to simply not run to work. Almost half of those who did not have a shower at work opted for this and many of those interviewed did likewise. While lacking shower provisions may constrain run-commuting to work, many run-commuters find the simplest and most desirable way to negate this is simply to run home instead:

> **Callum:** But there are no shower facilities … and I just think it'll [wet wipe shower] be unpleasant. And certainly in hot weather, I just wouldn't want to inflict it on my co-workers. I get quite sweaty when I run and … so no, I just run home.

> **Dominic:** And the reason I don't run-commute to work is because we don't have showers there … I've used baby wipes just to freshen up afterwards and then we just carry on with our day and it's been okay but you can't ever shake the feeling that you've not really had a proper shower after a sweaty run. I think some people would probably take issue with it. They wouldn't vocalise it, but they'd still think, "Ugh, scummy," or whatnot. They may not necessarily say it to me, but I'd never shake the feeling they'd think that.

Showers were one of the most discussed topics in conversation with run-commuters. What this analysis demonstrates is the key role it plays in enabling and constraining run-commuting possibilities. This significance derives from the bodily effects of running, the implications of working for the day with these effects, and the cultural (un)acceptability of sweat in the workplace (Waitt, 2014; Waitt and Stanes, 2015). While it may not be final in determining whether run-commuting is possible, showers in their presence, quality, quantity, time-demands and social relations, are certainly central in determining patterns of run-commuting for most run-commuters. They are thus, a key component in the production of run-commuting.

Storage

Storage facilities in work spaces are also key logistical components in run-commuting practices. They provide a stop gap to the issues of stuff needing to undertake commutes as well as bodies. As discussed further in Chapter 10, running with lots of stuff is often undesirable and unfeasible. Workplace storage helps overcome this issue by restricting the amount of things that need to be transported and the frequency of such transportation. As will be discussed below, run-commuters make use of workplace storage differently for different items in the development of routines of transport and storage to facilitate their run-commuting. This has already been seen in the discussion of stuff-only commutes in the last chapter. Being able to store things at work are central in making these work – things are brought to work before they are needed and must be stored somewhere until they are:

> **Jamie:** Having the storage space is also a huge help because I can store the stuff that I need in the office which will make my commuting easier. So that sort of stuff is the largest things that help encourage my run-commuting.

As this section will explore, storage provisions in work spaces can be significant in enabling run-commuting, and unlike showers, are important regardless of the direction of run-commuting.

As seen in Figure 8.1, just over half of run-commuters claim to have some form of storage at work that enables their run-commuting. More detail about this was given by interviewees in this project, where they revealed the range of storage facilities they have at work. A few, but not many, participants in the study had designated lockers or storage spaces they could use:

> **Carl:** Oh, flexible desk, yeah. Clear up your whole desk and then you put laptop and papers in a separate locker. So if you were to walk in this building at 6 a.m., it would look just empty, you can't keep anything out. Do have a locker, the idea being that people should be able to sit in different spaces and set up in different places. So there's no Carl's desk.
>
> **Simon:** Okay. And is that locker quite big? Is it ample for everything you want to store in it or need storing?
>
> **Carl:** No, not at all. I have clothes and a towel and all the rest of it, so I just nicked another locker so now I have 2 lockers. Apparently, my boss has 3 lockers so I'm not that bad.

> **Sara:** We have a comms room, which has got all the servers, and there's a clothes rail. So there's a few of us that cycle in and things like that, so they've got a clothes rail in there so you can hang up your stuff … My boss, she cycles in, so she put the rack in, because she's got a whole wardrobe in there. I just have a couple of coat hangers on there with clothes hung up in there and then it's just shoes under the desk.

Although not always sufficient in size or quality, having a dedicated space for storage enables run-commuting for some practitioners by providing a devoted space to store items which facilitate their run-commuting. Interestingly, the provision of specific personal storage, particularly lockers, was often tied to work space

architecture with those in open-plan, hot-desking environments more likely to have such a provision, as seen in Carl's case.

Negotiating storing stuff in such shared spaces was a common discussion point among participants. There is an acknowledgement that in sharing the space with others, consideration and respect needs to be applied to ensure others are not inconvenienced, put out or put off by what you are storing there. This is often restricted what is possible to store in enabling run-commuting, as Lisa describes:

> **Lisa:** It's a shared office. So pretty much the only thing I can do is … leave shoes under my desk, which means I'm always wearing inappropriate shoes because they don't go with anything.

Evident here is the understanding of work spaces not only as material sites but social relations too. This is often significant in run-commuting practices and affects what practitioners think is reasonable and appropriate to do or to store (in this case). In many ways, materials related to run-commuting or enabling run-commuting can be thought of as matters out of place. Drawing on Aldred and Jungnickel's (2013) use of the term to discuss bicycle parking strategies, running accoutrements could perhaps be seen as matter out of place, as objects in the wrong context. How these materials, especially those designed for motion, are perceived when immobile and out of place within office environments was a common concern for run-commuters, influencing their storage routines and practices.

That said, most run-commuters did report to having some personal space within their workplace, where this out-of-placeness was less of an issue, and which they often then repurposed for run-commuting storage means:

> **Callum:** Yeah, I've got a desk drawer, so 3 desk drawers, and that's where I put my running stuff in the morning thing.
>
> **Dominic:** I've got my own office, which helps immensely with the run-commuting. So I've got running stuff all over my office, under the desk, in drawers and— I keep it tidy, but there is a lot of running paraphernalia in there.
>
> **Fiona:** We're largely open-plan, but I do have my own office with a wardrobe in the corner. Well, actually it's not a wardrobe. It's a coat hook, to which most of my PAs say, "You really can't hang all of your clothes on

there." "Yes, I can," I say. I should have brought you a picture. I'll take a picture and send it to you (Figure 8.3).

Figure 8.3 Fiona's work wardrobe

Fiona's work wardrobe provides quite an intimate window in to the storage infrastructures run-commuters adopt, as indeed wardrobes do for understanding the spatial practices, social meanings, material relationships and identities associated with clothing (Cwerner, 2001; Woodward, 2007; Skjold, 2017). My use of adopt there is apposite. There is a sense of appropriating and creative storage solutions tangible here. These storage provisions were unlikely meant for run-commuting

stuff but practitioners are repurposing these facilities to meet their needs, as many participants also did for changing facilities. This resonates to some of the adapted bicycle storage strategies employed by bicycle commuters (Aldred and Jungnickel, 2013), demonstrating this is not necessarily unique to run-commuting practices. While again a privilege perhaps more likely to be experienced by those more senior within an organisation, this demonstrates the possibilities for tailoring work spaces to help enable run-commuting. Specific hard infrastructures may not always be necessary if makeshift ones can be devised within the existing space.

This is not true for all however. There were a few run-commuters interviewed in the study who lacked any possibilities of storage in the workplace:

> **Lara:** I take everything with me … in the office there isn't really that much space so I tend to carry around a rucksack that weighs around 6 to 8 kilogrammes most days.

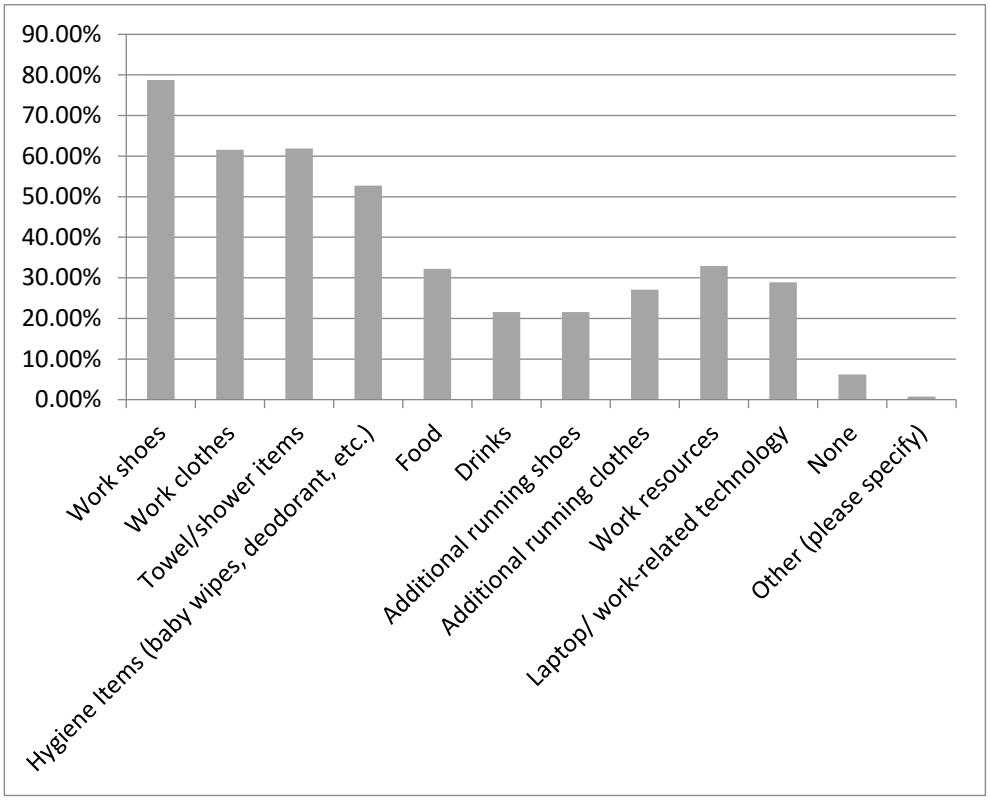
In these situations, a bag is often used as an all-in-one transport and storage system. This means that everything must be transported to and from every day and is likely to impact on the experience and possibilities of run-commuting. Given the importance placed on storage infrastructure at work, specific or appropriated, by run-commuters, this is unlikely to be a solution for everyone. Most run-commuters appreciate the enabling effects of workplace storage in easing the logistics and encumbrance of run-commuting, which begs the question of what items do run-commuters store at work to aid in these efforts.

There is a vast array of different things that run-commuter store at work, accoutrements related both to work and to running, as seen in Figure 8.4. Most run-commuters spoke of a few different logistical rhythms they employ to manage the stuff kept at work effectively. In essence, there were some items that stay at work almost permanently, items that are changed roughly weekly, and items that are changed on a daily basis. Those kept predominantly at work tended to be bulkier items that would be difficult and cumbersome to transport on the run, and items which do not need changing often:

> **Mia:** I keep a pair of work-appropriate footwear under the desk, scandalising my colleagues.
>
> **Malcolm:** My drawer at my desk is full of shower gel, deodorant, and things. I bought it in the hospital shop when I started working here.

Oliver: I now leave my jeans and my shoes at work … which are the heaviest items I've got.

Figure 8.4 Items kept at work



Shoes were the most common item reported to be constantly kept at work, and relatedly, the most difficult item to run with too. Though said playfully, Mia's suggestion that her colleagues were scandalised by her keeping footwear under her desk is indicative of how many matters out of place are received by colleagues (Aldred and Jungnickel, 2013). But the storage routines surrounding shoes and other bulky items such as jeans are important in making the logistics of run-commuting work. They often sit alongside long-lasting items such as toiletries, which may be unnecessary to take home. In such cases, run-commuters are often purchasing multiple sets of items, one to keep at home and one at work.

However, an additional, and very interesting category, of permanently stored items also emerged from the research. This could be classified as emergency supplies. Despite well-refined routines, most run-commuters shared stories of where things have gone wrong logistically:

Carl: Many mistakes I made where I realised I didn't bring in my stuff … There's a lot of instances of mismatched socks or yeah, swimming trunks

> doubling up as underwear, shirts that I didn't expect to be wearing. A time I forgot I didn't have any trousers, so I had to go out and I buy some.

Learning from this, and helping to negate the issues which arise from it, a few run-commuters spoke about keeping forms of emergency supplies at work should they be caught short again:

> **Holly:** I do have like a kind of… It's almost like a lost property bag from school, and it's got like— You know the way you do organised run, you get a free T-shirt, some of them you absolutely love, and others are like… They're like yellow or something. A horrible colour or they don't fit very well or— There's just something about them that you don't like. So they kind of go in my work lost property bag, and if ever I'm stuck then I can use one of those.

This category of permanently stored items acts as a failsafe and, as such, sits outside the usual logistical considerations and patterns within run-commuting but are nonetheless important in sustaining the practice longer term.

More firmly within the usual logistical considerations and patterns of run-commuting, however, are the items which are stored less permanently than those above. Two categories exist here, those rotated roughly weekly and those rotated roughly daily. Both categories consist of the stuff of run-commuting in regular use, required at both work and home, and/or with a shorter lifespan before it needs changing. These are the materials most commonly considered within the weekly and daily planning cycles run-commuters undertake. At the weekly level are either items that do not need replenishing after each use or which can wait to be transported in bulk, such as dirty (non-running) clothes, towels or multi-use clothes:

> **Callum:** Friday is the take-home day. So I'm burdened with stuff on Friday. Not that many. It's 2 or 3 things changes of clothes so it's not horrendous, really.

Items rotated more regularly generally consist of single use clothes, food containers and dirty running gear:

> **Fiona:** And then obviously I need to take in underwear, tights and then shirts or T-shirts or whatever I'm wearing underneath a dress or under a jacket or under trousers or whatever.

Such items are generally only stored for the day and so make lower demands on finding regular storage but do feature more commonly on run-commuting bodies as they run between work and home, and therefore are more routinely considered within the logistical planning of run-commuting.

As a key hard infrastructure, storage plays a crucial role in the logistics of run-commuting and functions to enable it in multiple ways. Through the provision of specific storage or the appropriation of work space by run-commuters for their storage needs, the ability to keep items at work enables run-commuting greatly by restricting the amount that needs to be ran with, and thus increasing its feasibility and desirability. Run-commuters in the study have generally developed routines around storage in the workplace which sees items stored for different lengths of time before being replaced. This is related to various factors, including the experience of run-commuting, hygiene, social relations and transportability. Invariably heavier and more cumbersome items along with emergency supplies and longer life span items are kept longer at work, where they may face issues of being matter out of place, while single-use items or those required at home as well as work are transported to and fro more readily. As an enabler of run-commuting, storage is a vital step in run-commuting practices but it is also evident that run-commuters can make do and appropriate the spaces of work for these means in lieu of distinct provision. While storage is crucial, specific storage may not be necessary but certainly helps to facilitate the practice.

This section has shown the distinct impact hard infrastructures have on run-commuting practices. Not only do they enable or constrain run-commuting in their presences and absences but they also help determine what is possible within run-commuters' routines. They are not just abstract facilities however. Hard infrastructure are spaces that are used and lived and, as such, the experience run-commuters have of these infrastructures are just as instructive in the production of run-commuting as the availability of them. While showers, and storage have been discussed here as perhaps the most decisive and considered hard infrastructures by run-commuters, they are by no means the only ones. Multiple other hard infrastructural provisions, whether existing or desired, were discussed by run-commuters, including provided/appropriated changing spaces, clothes washing / drying facilities, hair drying facilities and kitchen and food facilities. There was a suggestion among participants in this study, however, that the needs of all run-

commuters may not be equal and that there is a gendered aspect to the hard infrastructures of work spaces:

> **Harriet:** Let's go big picture. Something that would help me run-commute more is if there were no gender norms around that. I mean, you know … There are different expectations around how we tend ourselves and if they didn't exist it would be easier for me to run-commute because I wouldn't give a shit about makeup.

There is a sense here that women may require or desire more facilities or time at work, in order to meet different bodily needs, such as drying longer hair, or to meet personal desires or societal expectations of women in the workplace, as discussed earlier in the chapter. Ultimately, all of the hard infrastructures in work spaces are negotiated differently by different run-commuters who develop their own logistic routines. There is an interplay going on between run-commuters' mobile desires, the possibilities of specific and repurposed infrastructures in the workplace, workplace expectations, and identity politics. In meeting the needs of run-commuters resulting from logistical desires and bodily effects of run-commuting, the hard infrastructures of work spaces are crucial to making run-commuting happen and to the experience of performing it.

Conclusion

This chapter on workplaces has explored how the space of work produces run-commuting through the different ways in enables and constrains the practice. A range of soft and hard infrastructures were identified which both made run-commuting more or less feasible (based on their presence or absence) but also affected the acceptability of run-commuting to work. This is crucial as work spaces are not just physical sites but are social spaces with affective atmospheres that need to be shared with others in harmonious ways. As such, spaces of work do not only help produce run-commuting by bookending journeys and by providing (or otherwise) facilities that can make run-commuting easier, but also by making it something run-commuters feel comfortable doing and atmospheres of acceptability. In this respect, flexible working hours, casual dress codes and cultures of physical activity were identified as particularly important soft infrastructure to help facilitate run-commuting. Hard infrastructure was shown to be more adaptable than soft to

meeting the needs of run-commuting. With the exception of showers which have a very significant impact on run-commuting feasibility and routines, if other specific facilities were lacking, run-commuters were able to repurpose space within workplaces to meet their needs. Run-commuters generally develop their own logistics in work spaces to satisfy their hygiene and storage needs while also meeting workplace expectations, creating an interplay play between specific facilities and repurposed ones to meet their needs. While it was recognised that not all run-commuters' needs are equal, with a particular gendering being apparent, the logistics run-commuters develop between the spaces of work and their run-commuting patterns generally functioned well to facilitate run-commuting, ease the process and create more desirable run-commuting experiences. Although partial due to researching with those who do run-commute rather than don't, this chapter has demonstrated how work spaces can produce run-commuting practices beyond just acting as start and end points, they provide a range of hard and soft infrastructure that in combination generally enables, entrains and supports run-commuting, albeit different permutations of it. Affordances of material sites, embodied experiences and interactions with consociates have also pervaded this discussion. As such, this chapter has, somewhat inadvertently, shown the applicability of Jensen's (2013) staging mobilities framework to understanding the impact spaces at the start and end of mobilities have on mobile practices, as well as the *in situ,* in the moment mobilities analysis he intended it for. This is something that could be applied more widely to understand how spaces beyond mobility have agency in mobile practices.

Chapter 9

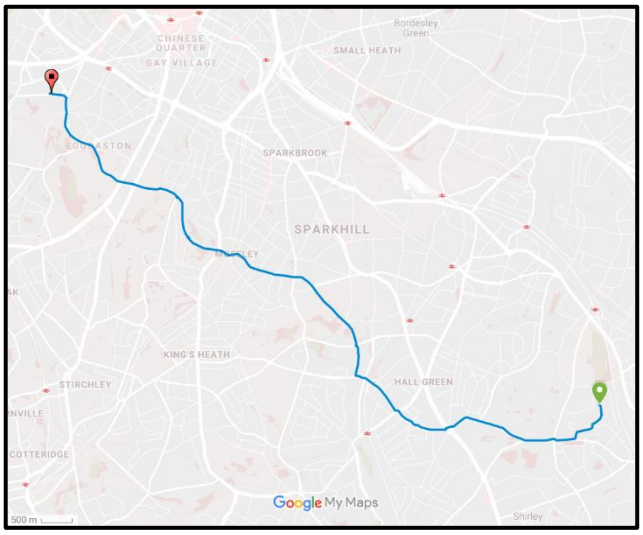
Routes and runs

This chapter takes as its central focus the mobile spaces of run-commuting itself by attending to the routes run-commuters run. Routes are crucial to the production of all mobilities. They are the conduits that channel mobilities, which entrain and direct mobilities, and provide the trajectory that forms the raw material for mobile practices. To draw on Jensen's (2013) conceptualisation, routes 'stage' the mobile experience from above and, in this case, run-commuters' routing decisions relate to and affect their motivations, needs, experiences, social interactions and perceptions. They are, thus, fundamental to run-commuting practices, to enabling them, to optimising them, and to experiencing them. Routes are vital to the taking place and production of run-commuting.

This chapter will focus on the routes of run-commuting, considering how they are determined and the impact they have on the production of run-commuting. The topic of routes and routing is important within wider running practices. As such, the questions of where and why runners run have been obvious targets for geographically-inclined research into running (McGookin and Brewster, 2013; Latham and Hitchings, 2016; Barnfield, 2017; 2020). Crucial in understanding such decisions is knowledge of what criteria the routes needs to fulfil. These criteria may relate to geography, topography, and embodied desires, as well as those concerning any running or training that may need to occur. As such, this chapter also entails a discussion of the sort of running done on run-commuting routes. This helps to inform understandings why certain routes are chosen above others.

Routes and routing is a fascinating topic to explore within running practices, but run-commuting routes offer new perspectives on the matter. At an abstract and fundamental level, run-commuting routes generally differ from wider running routes. Geographically, most running routes could be classed as pointless (Bissell, 2013). Most running routes take the shape of a loop, generally starting and ending in the same place (Cook et al, 2016a). Considering this abstractly without the complexities and context that comes with mobility, this is pointless movement as no locational displacement has occurred from the beginning of the run. However, with only one point influencing the trajectory of such running routes, rather than

the two on a usual A to B journey, the options for where to run swell and exploring routing choices in such practices is fascinating. Run-commuting, does not share this pointless trait, and marks a key point of difference between the practices of running and run-commuting. Run-commuting routes do take on a traditional A to B form, resulting in routes that are broadly linear rather than looped. Two examples from my own running practices demonstrate this nicely, as seen in Figure 9.1. Routing options and considerations alter in this A to B configuration. There is now a different end to where the run began and routing options narrow somewhat in order for this to be reached. However, it does also increase the spatial scope of a run, as you can travel further running in a line compared to a loop. How the need to get somewhere on a run combines with the factors influencing ordinary running routes, how routing options generally associated with commuting combine with those associated with leisure is an intriguing topic, and one this chapter seeks to explore.



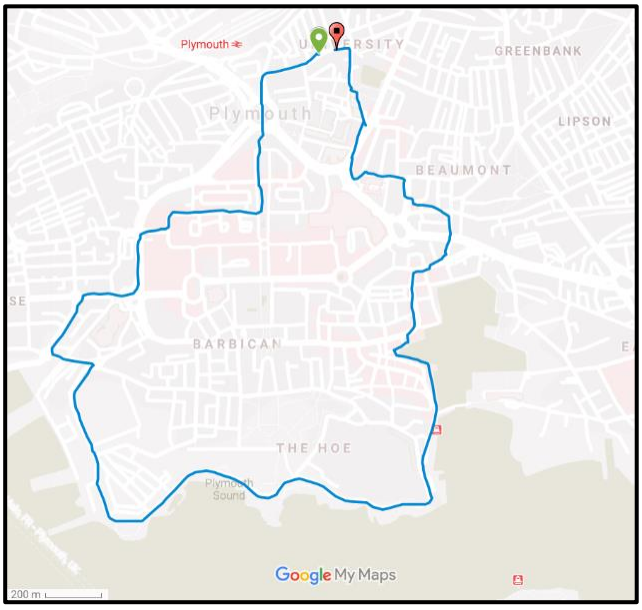


Figure 9.1 Route Shapes

(Left) Linear running

(Below) Looped running

However, the difference in run-commuting routes is not just a question of space. Run-commuting alters the time-space of running. Rather than evening and weekend running, the run-commuting of participants on this project generally occurred at rush hour, where the mass amalgamation of people's work rhythms results in busier and congested spaces. On top of this, the A to B nature of their run-commuting routes also prescribes that running will generally start or end in city centres (see Figure 5.1) where these rhythms most intensely coalesce. In essence, run-commuters are more greatly enmeshed in the wider urban and societal rhythms than when they run otherwise. The impact this has on run-commuters' routing decisions and the staging of run-commuting is important in understanding the production of run-commuting. As such, this chapter will undertake a focussed investigation into the routes and runs of run-commuting, beginning by analysing the running undertaken on run-commutes, followed by the factors affecting route choices before discussing the processes involved in developing these routes towards the end of the chapter.

Running on the run-commute

The brute facts of movement a run-commuting route needs to fulfil is one of the fundamental considerations in its curation. They set out what the route needs to satisfy in terms of distance, rhythm or topography that are then balanced against the different possibilities and desires of running on the commute, related to the busyness of the route spaces and the bodily effects of running. As discussed when exploring work spaces, the effort put in during running can have undesired consequences once at the destination. Therefore, the running undertaken on run-commuting is worth extra consideration as this will have onward impact. Running requirements set out what the route needs to satisfy and how that then feeds into the 'staging' of run-commuting experiences.

To begin this discussion, I should highlight that running-commuting, and indeed running more generally, is not always a case of just running. By this, I mean someone just setting off running without thought to the pace, distance or rhythm of their running. It certainly can be this (more on that below) but for many runners, there are different types of runs they may wish to complete. Beyond distance, these will

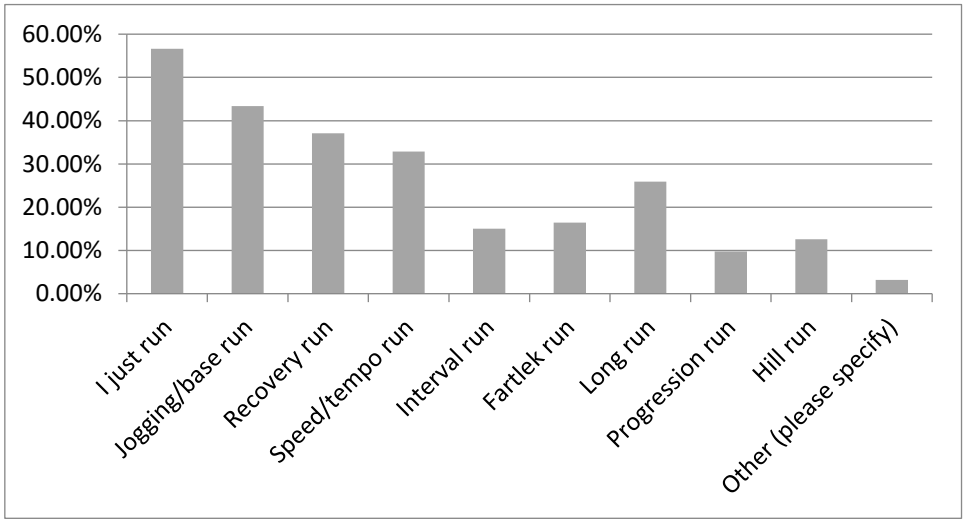
generally vary in terms of speed, rhythm or topography and the desires of routes capable of staging these different types of runs may well be different. While there is not space here to explain all types of runs, some of the key ones that crop up in the thesis are included in Table 9.1.

Table 9.1 Types of running

Run Type	Explanation
Jogging / base run	A relatively light and comfortable run.
Recovery run	A purposefully slow run where the aim is not to commit much effort but to let the body move and recover from other running undertaken.
Speed run	Repetitions of shorter distances undertaken at high or maximum speed.
Tempo / threshold run	A comfortably hard run just beyond a runner's comfort zone but is not beyond their ability to talk.
Interval run	Repetitions of short, intense efforts followed by period of rest or recovery.
Fartlek run	Swedish for speed play, fartlek is unstructured running where rhythms of running change as alternations between moderate, hard and easy efforts are randomly made.
Long run	A longer distance run, usually undertaken at a slower pace.
Progression run	A run with structured pace increases from beginning to end.
Hill run	A run which aims to run uphill more than usual.

As visible in the survey results (Figure 9.2), collectively, run-commuters have done all of these different running types on the commute. This has interesting implications for route choices as they are unlikely to be optmised on the same route. For example, a hill run is likely to occur on a route with very different topography to a speed run, and a long run likely to occur on a different route to an interval run. While some would be similar, each type of running would have its own optimal space requirements, a space whose design better entrains the different efforts they are making (Bahrami and Rigal, 2017). However, run-commuting does not take place in an artificial and rationalised sportscape, such as an athletics track (Bale, 2004), rather it occurs within publics spaces and places with no shielding from the onslaught of everyday life (Cook et al, 2017). The opportunities for optimising conditions here are reduced, so exploring how this plays out in run-commuters routing choices is of great interest.

Figure 9.2 Types of running done on the run-commute



Perhaps most striking in Figure 9.2, however, is the pre-eminence of slower or more comfortable running. The most selected option by survey respondents was 'I just run'. This suggests that for many, running is just running:

> **Callum:** This now, I'm just running it. I'm just plodding along … And I'm not training for anything in particular. I'll get home and I've immediately gotta help looking after two children, so I can't be exhausted and bathing in sweat at the end of it. I tend to run, especially since the new baby was born, quite slowly. Just take it easy. Just try and enjoy it.

> **Malcolm:** Most times it's been just a kind of easy pace running, essentially … It's difficult make the run-commute into a workout because you're dodging other pedestrians and it just doesn't work that way.

For others, there is a more active choice to undertake slower running on the commute, with jogging, recovery runs and long runs all featuring highly too:

> **Dominic:** I suppose prior to this year, run-commutes were always treated more as recovery runs, so very easy efforts, because I'd either done a hard session the day before or I'd gone quite far the day before.

> **Carl:** This is an easy run, yeah … I think it's all easy running, simple aerobic fitness and keeping almost like injury prevention actually, for having some resilience and running mileage.

Here we can see that decisions to run an easier pace emerge for a few reasons. For some, these are easier runs tied to a training programme; designated lighter runs that help to prevent injury and increase aerobic fitness. For others, easier running is opted for on a run-commute due to the onward bodily effects of running in terms of sweat, tiredness and concentration and how that meets, or doesn't, the demands of the destination. For others still, opting to run slower runs is a response to the time-space of the run-commute, recognising the difficulty that could be had in trying to run faster or complex running rhythms in busy and congested spaces. There is also the experiential factor at play here, for some running at a lighter pace is more desirable and enjoyable where they are seeking experiential benefits rather than training benefits.

Regardless of how it is reached, running run-commutes at slower paces is highly significant. It suggests that the routes run-commuting needs to fulfil are less demanding, both in terms of effort they need to entrain (Bahrami and Rigal, 2017) and in terms of specific topography or space in which to perform it. There is a sense that a slower run can absorb more negative elements of the route and still be tolerable. This was nicely demonstrated when asking run-commuters whether they mind stopping on the run-commute, many responded in a similar way:

> **Malcolm:** No, because I don't make it into a workout. If I was making it into a workout then I would be very annoyed. If I was doing an interval and I have to stop, that would really annoy me. But that's why I don't do that.

Stopping on the run-commute was a fascinating topic to discuss with participants, but unfortunately there is not room in this thesis to unpack this any further. For our purposes, it demonstrates that some of the negative aspects of running in the time-space of the commute are less disruptive when undertaking more easy-going running. This results in less restrictive routing choices than if doing a different type of running where space demands are more specific. In such cases, other factors can become integral in determining the routes chosen, which this chapters seeks to explore.

Some runners do opt to do specific types of sessions, beyond just running, on the run-commute however. These are almost invariably tied to training programmes practitioners may be following and does demonstrate it is possible to do other types of running on the run-commute, albeit less commonly. When explaining these different types of runs, however, participants often indicated particular routing choices they make to accommodate and best serve such runs:

> **Callum:** Although the marathon training, I actually managed to get a lot of that done on the run-commute. I'll just do really long run-commutes. So I'll do a 7-mile run, which is far longer than it'll take to get home, but I'll just go up the canal towpath and back down again.
>
> **Dominic:** Sometimes the plan will dictate that I run … intervals, so I will plot the routes so that it's long enough to allow me to do the intervals on the canal towpath, and then I'd come off the towpath and do my warm-down where I'm not fussed about stopping and pausing if traffic commands or et cetera. So I try and make the route work for the purposes of what I'm trying to achieve.
>
> **Carl:** So if we get on the towpath in the summer, I made this run where I do intervals, so like 800 metres on, 200 metres a bit easier. So almost turning the towpath into a track.

Here we can see the routing decisions that run-commuters make in order to meet their running needs. As exemplified by Callum, extending run-commutes was quite a common phenomenon should the requirement for a long run exceeded the commute distance. These quotes also illustrated the runs of different rhythms being done on the commute. Here, most speak about altering and tailoring routes to enable such running to be undertaken or in identifying sections of their usual route in which it would be possible to do such running. In this, there is a recognition that

the time-spaces of run-commuting may be suboptimal for running and to satisfy training needs of different types of runs may require practices to be altered. In doing so, we can also see how runners appropriate the shared spaces and affordances of cities for their practice (see also Latham and Layton, 2020). As visible in the above quotes, some run-commuters almost talk of an abstraction of space in fulfilling particular running requirements. While not totally divorced from the phenomenological, some ways of thinking about the spaces of running demonstrates a kind of distilling down of places in all their colours and textures to their geometry, distances and topography. As seen in Carl's discussion of his interval running on the canal towpath, places are segmented into routes and routes into sections and intervals, space is being utilised akin to the rationalised conditions of the athletics track. Such processes have important impacts on routing decisions, elevating the need to satisfy training, distance and rhythm demands through the space ran within, potentially dampening the influence of other routing factors discussed later in the chapter.

The degree to which running needs come to dominate routing decisions is often pinned on the question of whether practitioners see their run-commute as a workout/training session or not. Despite the vast majority (91.64%) of survey respondents using run-commuting as part of a training or fitness plan, this has generally manifested with more comfortable and relaxed running being undertaken on the run-commute, although not exclusively. This is likely to derive from the embodied desires of run-commuters and the restrictions of running in the time-space of a commute. Thus, factors beyond simply running needs are likely to become important in the routing decisions of run-commuters, and the knock-on effects that has for the staging of run-commuting experiences. The following sections take a closer look at the beyond-running factors important in run-commuters' routing decisions.

Factors affecting route choice

As well as the changes in shape and time-space noted above, the routes of run-commuters is a particularly interesting topic for a variety of reasons. Firstly, running generally lacks specific provision within everyday spaces. The infrastructural provisions for running tend to be looped tracks in either athletics stadiums, parks

or forests (Bale, 2004; Quivstrom, 2013; 2016; Borgers et al, 2016) rather than embedded within city spaces like walking and cycling provision can be. This is likely related to running's dominant designation as a sport, exercise or leisure activity rather than a transport one, and as such run-commuters' route choices are less influenced by specific infrastructural provision than cycling, for example (Pucher et al, 2010; Vedel et al, 2017). On top of this, many run-commuters are new to the practice and will generally be extending their route repertoire and running hinterlands due to the linear nature of run-commuting demanding a wider geographical scope than looped runs. These reasons set up the question of what influences run-commuters' route choices as an enticing prospect to explore.

The need for run-commuting routes to accomplish both running and commuting underpin all route choices being made and run-commuters generally balance these factors with other factors affecting of route choices explored below. The influence of running requirements on run-commuting routes have been discussed above and these sit alongside journey requirements of start, end and waypoints as foundational to all run-commuting routes. They stipulate the locations that need connecting through running, as well as the sorts of movement the spaces ran within need to entrain. Beyond these underpinning factors, the relative lack of restrictions on where it is possible to run entails a wide variety of other factors that become important in the routing practices of run-commuters. A huge variety emerged from interviews (both mobile and static) with run-commuters and those discussed in this chapter were either the most common/influential factors or those more specific to run-commuting routes rather than those of running more generally[1]. Six broad factors are explored below, which alongside journey and running requirements, inform the routes run-commuters opt to run, and in turn, help stage run-commuting and embodied experiences of the practice.

Directness

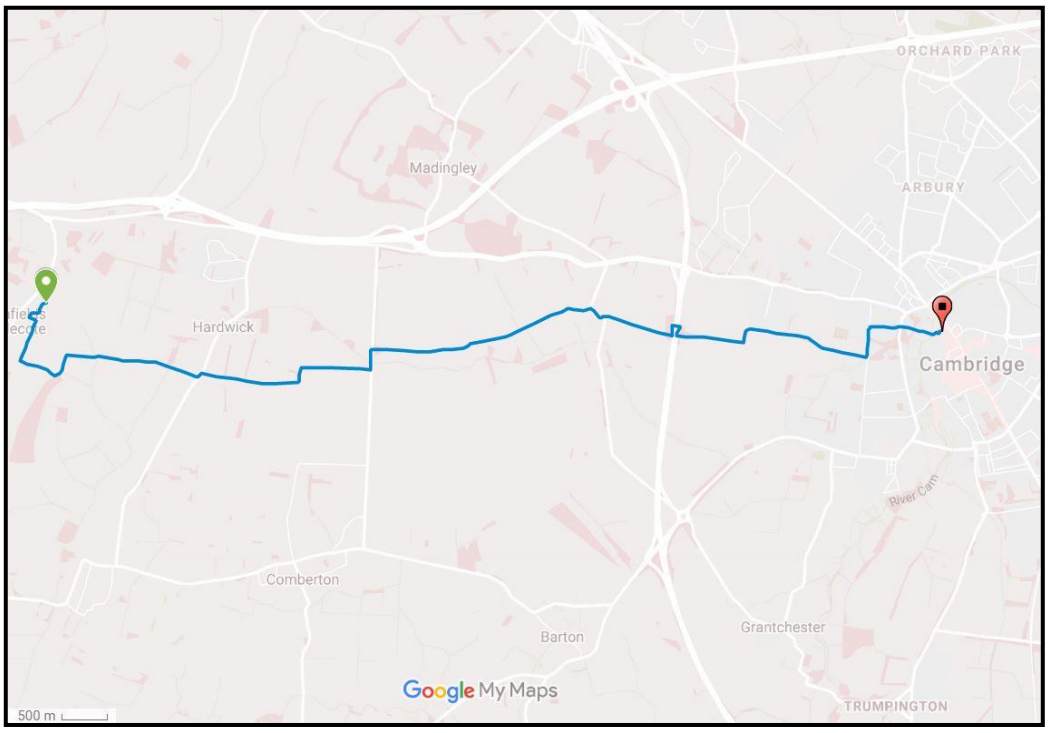
Related to the discussion of distance earlier in the thesis, the directness of the route is a key consideration for run-commuters. By direct here, I do not mean as the

[1] Other routing factors that were discussed by run-commuters but are not explored further here include exploration, wayfinding/navigation, interest/boredom, topography/gradient and resistance/protest.

crow flies. All mobilities are channelled in some ways, so therefore I just mean a route that is roughly linear. For some, especially those just running or recovery running, a route that is roughly direct is desirable (see also Figure 9.3):

> **Carl:** The morning run is almost always the short version anyways, which I suppose speaks to the fact that it's mostly I'm just using it as a way to get in.
>
> **Holly:** It's the most direct route that's not A roads or anything with bad pollution.
>
> **Oliver:** I think it is the most direct route and it's quite nice at the same time.

Figure 9.3 Sofia's direct run-commute



In these discussions of directness we can see other considerations sneak in too, with run-commuters explaining their routes are as direct as possible while avoiding pollution and busy roads, or still being nice, for example. For those who do indicate directness as a key factor however, the sense of run-commuting being a form of transport, rather than purely leisure comes through here. As Carl states, he is just using it as a way to get in to work, and thus minimising travel time and distance is

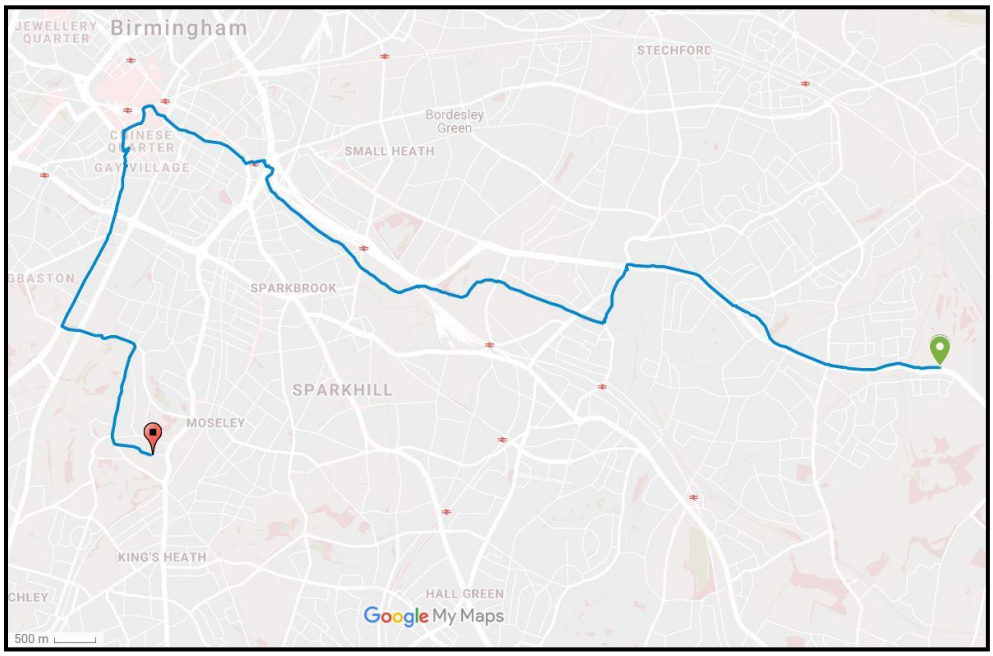
one the priorities of the route. This is, of course, unless running requirements dictate otherwise where perhaps run-commuting's function as a leisure activity increases in significance:

> **Holly:** So this [direct route] is like functional running, so this is like, I'm getting home. It's function. And if I do a long run and run around Regent's Park, Primrose Hill, so then it's like functional line with a run added onto it. Does that make sense?

The sense of run-commuting's position as between spheres of commuting and leisure is palpable here. It is has both utility and lesuire elements and thus the route choice can determine which of these elements comes to the fore most strongly. For direct routes, generally it is run-commuting's utility that is being championed but with some regard to the embodied experience being exhibited in run-commuters' explanations.

For others, directness is not something they seek in their run-commuting routes. While often this is a case of meeting distance requirements as discussed earlier, there are other reasons for this too as seen below and in Figure 9.4:

Figure 9.4 Mia's indirect run-commute



Harriet: No, it's definitely not the most direct because the most direct, it would be really, really horrible. It would be along Calder Road, which is this massive road going in and out of Edinburgh. It'd be horrible, aesthetically horrible and fumy horrible and just horrible and safety horrible. There's no way I'd run the most direct way.

Jamie: It's not the most direct route, but it is an easier route to follow.

Mia: The most direct route would be carrying on through Acocks Green, kind of brings you out around the back of Sparkhill but it's just not nice … it's just a bit grim.

Some of the other factors run-commuters take into consideration when devising their routes become visible here again. Along with wanting to extend distances, indirect run-commutes can emerge for a variety of reasons, including safety, navigability, air quality and aesthetics. In essence, there are forms of experiential desires here too, not just a desire to get between work and home. We can see here the ongoing compromise run-commuters are making between the utility of the practice and the pleasure of it. Those opting for indirect routes (within reason) are perhaps privileging the pleasure of the practice rather than its function and for these run-commuters run-commuting may be a practice that sits more firmly within leisure and exercise than it does within transport. That said, many run-commuters report having a variety of routes, some more direct and some less so, which fulfil different functions and desires. As such, this ongoing compromise affects many of the routing decision run-commuters make, as the rest of this section will explore.

Safety

Safety is one of the most important factors run-commuters consider when constructing their run-commuting routes. Safe routes are something run-commuters seek while simultaneously avoiding those places perceived to be less safe. Such considerations pick up on longstanding interests relating to the geographies of fear (Valentine, 1989; Pain, 2000; Smith, 2008; England and Simon, 2010) and similar to findings in this field, there are a range of different safety fears run-commuters consider when routing:

Callum: [The canal] is just nicer, there's less traffic noise, there's no traffic. It's safer. You're not gonna be run over.

Sam: Now, running home, I can't really do that. It feels too dangerous. There's been a lot of muggings and attacks on the canal. You see news reports about it.

Mia: But during the winter, it's pitch black, it's icy, there's no light and suddenly the nice, friendly canal doesn't seem so friendly anymore because you can't see random person who's hiding under a bridge.

Cars, other people, crime and physical hazards are identified here as some of the unsafe things run-commuters seek to avoid on their routes. Therefore, it is quite common for heavily-trafficked, isolated, unobservable and uneven-surfaced spaces to be avoided. There is also a strong recognition in these quotes that the safety, or lack of it, a route offers changes throughout the year. While canals may offer reprieve from the risks associated with being in close proximity to cars, in the winter they presents risks in the form of unlit, quiet spaces where danger cannot be seen, and in physical hazards from icy surfaces. In the winter, many run-commuters avoid canals whereas they are drawn to them in the summer. Light and weather conditions often have a changeable but significant impact on routing decisions, as they do to the geographies of fear (Madge, 1997).

Changing routes and changing the time-space of routes were common occurrences among run-commuters to devise safer routes when the qualities of places changed in such ways (see also Carter, 2018). Discussions of light and their impact on people and places have generally been neglected in geography. However, recent work has remedied this, most notably by Tim Edensor (2012; 2015a; 2015b; 2015c; 2015d), illuminating the important affects and effects of light and darkness on experiencing time and space. He has shown the multiple and complex ways in which light, and changes in light, transform spaces and experiences through a range of complex apprehensions and meanings. Light affects our perception of the world and how we sense it; it has its own aesthetics and contributes to atmospheres with their affective potential and capacities. In the case of run-commuters, this is affective potential that limits when light fades. The atmospheres it contributes to can be experienced as dangerous and uncomfortable, playing into the fearful imaginaries and sense of entrapment associated with darkness (see also Shaw, 2015). For some run-commuters, darkness limits both space and mobility in hopes of sustaining safety. This is common in wider running practices too. As Edensor and Lorimer (2015)

note, darkness can change the routes, practices and experiences of running (see also Barnfield, 2016a). It increases senses of vulnerability and uncertainty and as such, running in darkness rarely occurs beyond the reach of streetlight, something true for many run-commuters.

Much like wider research into the geographies of fear (Valentine, 1989; Pain, 1997; Brownlow, 2005), there is also a gendering to these phenomena. While not ubiquitous, women discussed safety fears as being impactful on their practice more commonly than men, and men also recognised that some of the time-spaces of their routes may not be comfortable for women:

> **Malcolm:** I think if I was a female runner on my own in the dark, I don't think I'd be terribly comfortable with that route, but maybe I'm a bit more complacent, perhaps un-rightly so, I don't know.

We can see here that the asserted accessibility and freedom of running may not be equally applicable to all. Feminist explorations of running have highlighted the embodied vulnerability of lone women on the run, who in turn, constantly balance risk and agency, undertaking appraisals of spaces before running into them (Allen-Collinson, 2010; Witkowski, 2018). When safety fears arise, a material reduction of space as well as mobility can occur, as was the case with many run-commuters in this study. This marks another significant way in which practices of run-commuting are gendered.

While not felt by all, perceptions and experiences of safety have a discernible impact on the routing of run-commuters. Safety fears can arise relating to other forms of mobility, to particular places, to particular atmospheres, to physical hazards, to other people, and to crime. These are fears hugely impacted by the built environment, light and weather conditions, as well as having a gendering to them (Koskela and Pain, 2000). They impact on run-commuting routes through the avoidance of dark, narrow and limited-exit spaces, heavy car traffic, and places run-commuters perceive to be riskier than others. These are more acutely felt during the winter months and results in some selecting different routes throughout the year and in others opting not to run-commute at all in the winter. Safety, thus, is a crucial consideration in the development of run-commuting routes and in staging the embodied experiences of run-commuting.

Escape options

Related to the above discussion of safety, some run-commuters also discussed building escape points into their route, should anything go wrong, such as injury, fatigue or safety issues. These escape options often entailed identifying public transport options to use if journeys could not be continued on foot, or areas where isolation could be overcome:

> **Sara:** I always used to have an emergency £5 note in my phone … so if I died [energy-wise, not actual death] on a run then I could always hop on a bus home.

> **Mia:** If you needed to bail, that's the bail point (Figure 9.5). So that would bring me out to one of the side roads, and you can then attach onto the Coventry Road. Or if you jump off just at The Ackers, that brings you directly onto the Coventry Road. There's no bus stop, but it's a bit closer to civilisation.
>
> **Simon:** Are these points you've just learnt about or you've actively looked for them?
>
> **Mia:** I've looked for them just in case.

Such escape options, while generally rarely used, form an important element of run-commuters' routes, offering solutions should any issues occur while on the run. As such, many run-commuters plan their route to synchronise with public transport options, and in cases, even take transport routes, such as Tube lines, as the basis for their route. This could be another factor behind the geographies of run-commuting, where cities with well-established and easy-to-use public transport networks, such as London, appear prominent among the run-commuting population. This also demonstrates another way in which run-commuting can be reliant on other transport mobilities to help enable and facilitate it, even if only in emergency situations.

Figure 9.5 Mia pointing out an escape point

Flow

Another significant, and possibly the most widely discussed, factor affecting run-commuters' route choices was that of flow. This was alluded to in interviews in various different guises, as will be demonstrated, and is one of the factors more concerned with the experiences of run-commuting and run-commuting's leisure/pleasure aspects that its transport utility. While flow is important in many mobile practices, consider the regular reports on radio stations describing local traffic flows and where they may be slower than desired in particular, flow in regards to run-commuting takes on a different perspective. It is less concerned with the impact it may have on destination arrival and travel times, and more concerned with the pleasure of that movement (see also Chapter 10). Flow, as an embodied rhythmic concept, is highly important within running practices (Csikszentmihalyi et al, 2017). It relates to the physical and mental states of the runner and their feelings of continuous, harmonious and synchronous motion. As will be discussed further in Chapter 10, a flowing rhythm is a significant embodied desire of running but this can be a difficult state to enter, a fragile one to maintain, and one easy interrupted. This is especially true within time-spaces of a run-commute and run-commuters often construct routes aiming to avoid punctuations to that flow, as explained by participants in this study:

Jamie: I often find that though the larger roads are busier … you actually deal with fewer traffic lights because there either just aren't any or the side roads are set up so that … the main roads just keep going … I don't like to stop-start. I like to just keep on going. If I have to stop and start, it just breaks the continuity, especially when I was more actively involved in my training. If you got to stop and start every time, it just breaks up your running as well.

Carl: The uninterrupted [factor] comes first … At the moment, on the short route run home, there's only one road to cross and that's to leave my house, then there's nothing to stop you just running through the route. [On this route] you get all these first 10 or 15 minutes done … running over past the market and all of these traffic lights, and then you just get on the express train - Regent's Canal. Yeah, you can design a fairly uninterrupted route.

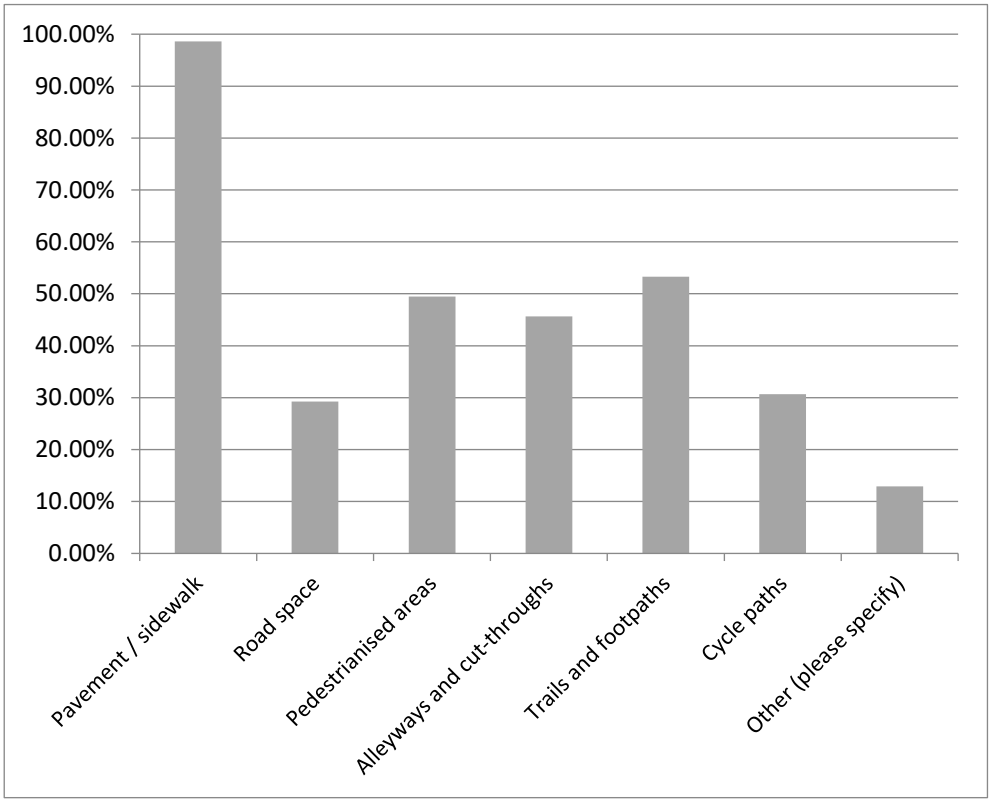
Simon: How do you cope with having to negotiate pedestrians and cyclists?

Fiona: Partly that's through route selection. I generally run along the river and that's quite wide. So if I'm running home in the summer, I generally don't run home on the south bank [of the River Thames] because it's full of tourists, but north bank is much quieter so I would choose to go on the north bank. In the winter and in the mornings, it's less of an issue.

As these quotes exemplify, there are many interruptions to the physical and mental flow of run-commuting that practitioners seek to avoid. Road crossings, traffic lights, and encounters on congested streets all punctuate runners' flow with stoppages, disjointedness and attention-demands, which affect the physical and mental rhythms of run-commuters. These are generally not conducive to optimal running experiences (see Cregan-Reid, 2016, Ettema, 2016; Deelen et al, 2019). Run-commuters, therefore, described the various routing decisions they make to avoid interruptions to their flow. Most commonly this was traffic-free routes on pedestrianised infrastructure or quieter backstreets where road crossings, stoppages, cars and dense pedestrian flows could be minimised. In particular parks, canals and riverside paths were popular route choices to enhance the flow of run-commuting. The high profile of canals in discussions of safety above is partly a result

of these flow-enhancing properties that make is attractive to run-commuters (when the right conditions permit). This can be seen in Figures 9.6 – 9.8, which demonstrate the relatively high profile of pedestrianised areas, trails and footpaths among utilised infrastructure of survey respondents; a Strava heat map of run-commuting in London where the canal, river and park networks feature highly; a run-commuting route using the canal from one of participants in this study; as well as an image demonstrating the reprieve from traffic, crowds and road crossings such infrastructure can offer.

Figure 9.6 Infrastructure used on run-commuting routes



N.B. Other was mostly specified as canals and parks

Figure 9.7 Presence of canals, parks and rivers on the run-commuting heat map of London. Modified from Strava (2017b)

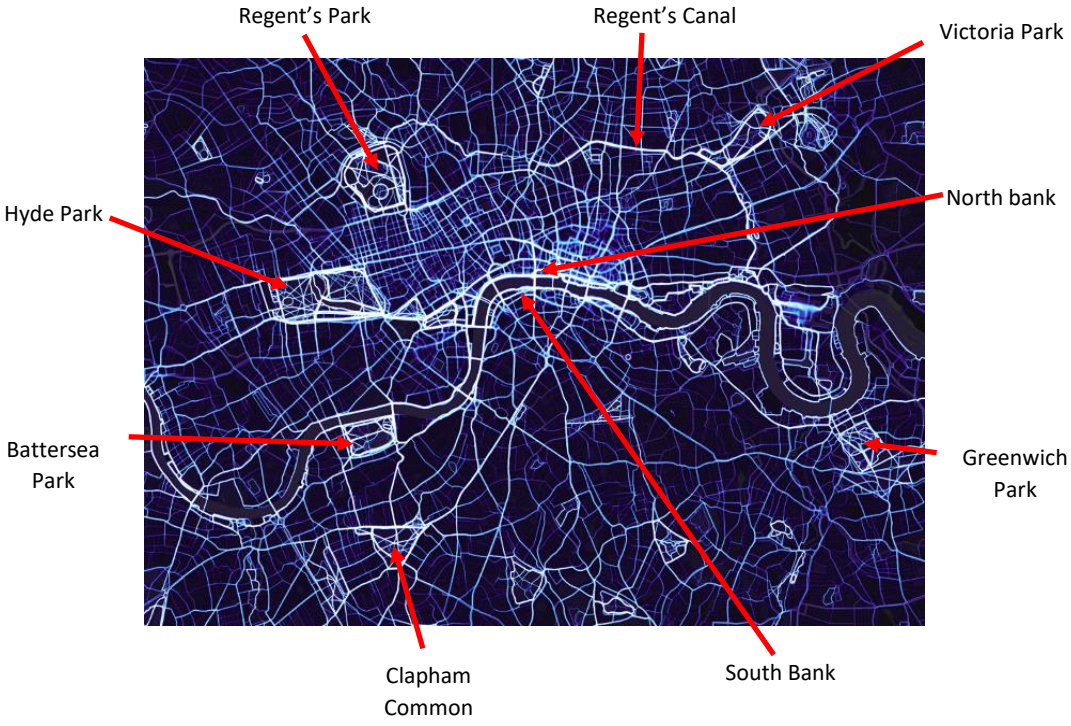
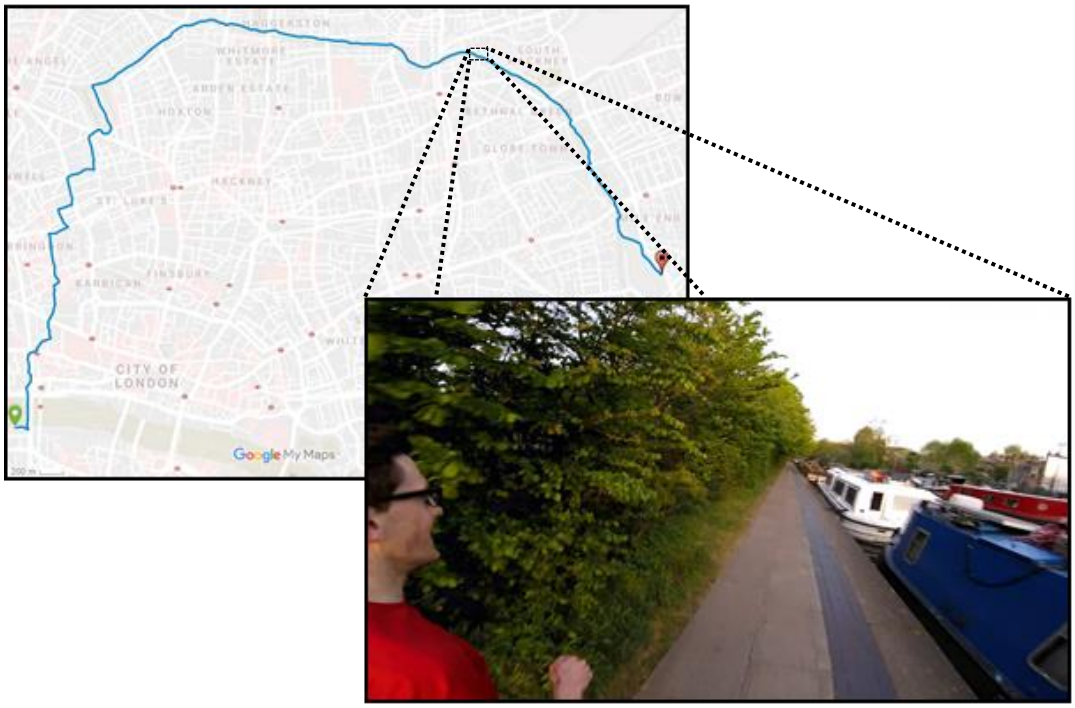


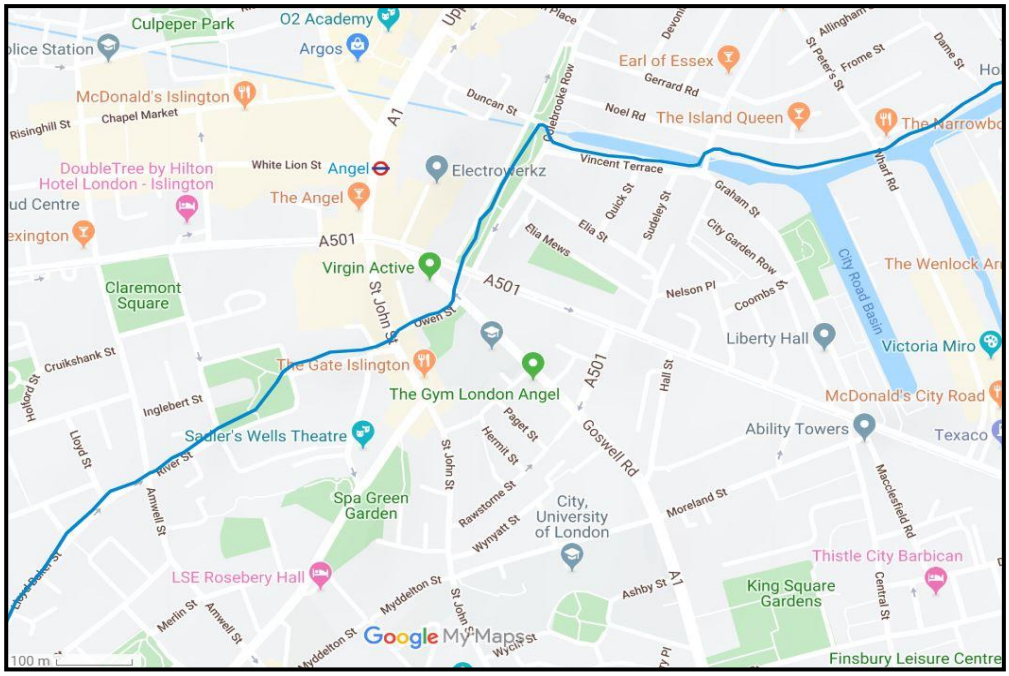
Figure 9.8 Carl's canal-based and flow-enabling route



The search for flow, thus, in an integral consideration in the development and staging of run-commuters' routes. In seeking quiet, traffic-free routes with few road crossings, stoppages and congested pavements, run-commuters are able to better fulfil the embodied desires they hope to gain from running and generally improve their experience. This is why many run-commuters will aim to include canals, parks, pedestrianised areas and river paths into their route as much as possible, even on the smallest of scale:

> **Sam:** But we're going to leave the canal now altogether. So we're actually going that way, but just to try and continue my preferred route of going through parks, we're going to go through this park (Figure 9.9) … I think it's the lack of pedestrians. There's just no pedestrians here … So yeah, it's really all about trying to find the quietest route possible.

Figure 9.9 Sam connecting low traffic and pedestrian spaces



Flow is central to the routing of run-commuters' journeys and in the hope they will stage more agreeable embodied experiences. It is an aspect more closely related to run-commuting's leisure nature than its transport one and the impetus of flow increases the use of green and blue spaces (space with vegetation and greenery, such as parks and gardens, and spaces near water, such as ponds, rivers and coasts – Donnelly and MacIntyre, 2019), pedestrianised routes and canals, in particular.

Again, this may relate to the wider geographies of running and the affordances of traffic-free routes in different cities. For example, canals are regularly used by the run-commuters interviewed in London, Birmingham and Leeds.

Pollution

The presence of pedestrianised spaces in run-commuters' routes, such as the green and blue spaces noted above, are also reached as the outcome of various other factors too. The first of these factors is an elemental one. Air is a fundamental element of life and its relations with bodies are perhaps most significantly mediated through breath. As such, air takes on particular importance in the practice of running. Not only does breathing provide an attunement to bodily corporeality (Allen-Collinson et al, 2016) but also a "constant and almost instantaneous feedback" service (Hockey, 2013: p.133). Evoking Henshaw's (2014) writings about smell, Simpson (2019) reminds us that beyond these sensory attunements to the moving body, when breathing we are actually taking air and whatever matter it suspends into our body. Engelmann (2015) suggests that through this we sense the texture and materiality of air, something perhaps more pronounced with the quicker and deeper breathing of running. This materiality and affectivity of air has only recently begun to be considered in geography. Conventionally, as one of the earth's surfaces, air was "largely taken as a pre-given, static and unchanging entity" (Nieuwenhuis, 2016: p.500). However, air is much more than this, "it is a medium of relation, host to vibrant airborne and invisible affectual atmospheres" (Squire, 2016: p.556) with weighty impacts on human existence (Adey, 2013; Adams-Hutcheson, 2019). Air is an important element, both meteorologically and affectively, in forming, deforming and reforming of atmospheres (McCormack, 2008; Adam-Hutcheson, 2019). This, in turn, impacts on the quality of place as the changing material, chemical and biological make-up of air influences the affective possibilities and capacities of place (Adey, 2013). In running, this is mostly sensed through breath, when air and its atmospheres become lived and embodied (Adey, 2013). As participants in the study demonstrate, the lived nature of air is not always desirable.

Run-commuters discussed the affectivity and materiality of air mostly in the guise of air quality and pollution levels. Heavy pollution and running do not mix well and

pose threats to health and performance, especially to those who suffer from asthma (Giles and Koehle, 2014; Guo and Fu, 2019). Moving running into the time-spaces of the commute subjects run-commuters to greater levels of pollution than they may usually encounter as they are more likely to be running in city centres when traffic levels are high and relatively stationary. While Hodgson and Hitchings (2018) report that runners in London seldom think about the idea of breathing polluted air, run-commuters in this study were more alive to this particular elemental geography:

> **Oliver:** When you run on the road, the fumes. When I do run on a road, I can definitely feel and smell and taste the traffic … I think it's fairly obvious when you run on the main road route into Edinburgh that you're gonna be around car fumes and you can definitely smell them. St John's Road is about a kilometre that way, and St John's Road is the most polluted route and it's the third-most polluted road in Scotland, and it's just down there. So I tend to avoid that road at all costs.
>
> **Richard:** Depends what route I was doing, I guess, because when I was running through the city centre, sometimes you could just smell it was a bit toxic. Do you know what I mean?
>
> **Holly:** So after we go through this bit, we get to Euston Road, which is extremely busy, but we literally just have to cross it but in summer, that's really bad. So you come out of this bit in summer and you get to Euston Road and it's like **coughing sound**. I think it's like one of the most polluted roads in London but…

Run-commuters' consciousness of air pollution and quality are visible here. Many report at least an awareness of it and others explain in more detail the experience of breathing it, the toxicity, the taste, the smell, the coughs and breathlessness. This is an atmosphere felt and, in many cases, suffered. Adey's (2013: p.293) contention that along with making us buoyant and light, atmospheres and air can "sink us, drowning us with heaviness, lethargy or exhaustion" certainly rings true here. Run-commuters feel the effects of pollution negatively on a multitude of sensory registers (Hodgson and Hitchings, 2018) and in seeking to minimise this they display an attunement to the material and affective imprints of air that Engelmann (2015) may class as an airy poetics. As such, avoiding polluted areas is something many run-commuters seek to do when routing, often opting for pedestrianised green/blue spaces or quieter backstreets where the perception and affectivity of pollution are

reduced, as is common in wider running and exercise practices too (Simpson, 2019; Barnfield, 2020).

Also visible in Holly's description of the Euston Road in London is the annual changes in pollution affect. She notes that the pollution is perceptively worse in the summer months, when hot weather and still conditions can result in worsening air quality. While avoiding higher-pollution routes is a factor throughout the whole year for many run-commuters, its importance can increase with changing elemental conditions as practitioners seek to stage favourable embodied experiences. If air's affectivity only becomes perceptible when the concentration of matter is voluminous enough that its microscopic materiality becomes thick and heavy (Simpson, 2019), then how pollution levels vary across space and time are crucial in informing run-commuters' routing practices.

Aesthetics and nature

Almost every run-commuter I spoke to as part of this project discussed a desire for a route that took in spaces with some form of aesthetic value. While aesthetics is conceived of in multiple ways (see Hawkins and Straughan, 2015), run-commuters generally discussed this as regarding a concern with nature and an appreciation of beauty. This is not to say that understandings of aesthetic experiences as also encapsulating textures, feelings, sensations, embodiments and affects are not resonant to running, their importance have been explored by Maivorsdotter and Quennerstedt (2012) and MacBride-Stewart (2019b). While again, a contested term (Castree, 2017), nature was mostly discussed by run-commuters as being within or proximate to green and blue spaces. While these spaces may not be 'natural', they have distinct aesthetics and are "distinct forms of spatial arrangement, a set of differences to which the body is likely to react" as Edensor (2000:p.101) writes about walking in the countryside. Further, Edensor (2000: p.101) argues that moving in such spaces can be linked to attempts to escape from urban life's perceived inauthenticity and to be open to the "sensory, material and imaginative intrusions" of these spaces that may differ from others had in cities. While not quite described in such terms, there was an overwhelming sense from participants in the project that running through green and blue spaces generated better experiences and, given the flexibility of routing options, something they sought to do where possible:

Harriet: It's a really lovely route. Like some of it is in the country through like fields and stuff and a lot of it's on this canal, which is really… a lovely route.

Mia: [The canals] are gorgeous. As soon as it's even remotely light in the evenings, they are gorgeous (Figure 9.10). You get some lovely sunsets down there. It's a really nice route. It's green, it's leafy … In the spring it was gorgeous, cause it was just this wall of cherry blossom. All the blossom had come out and you could smell it. It was gorgeous.

Figure 9.10 "But come on, how much nicer is this" – Mia on entering the canal

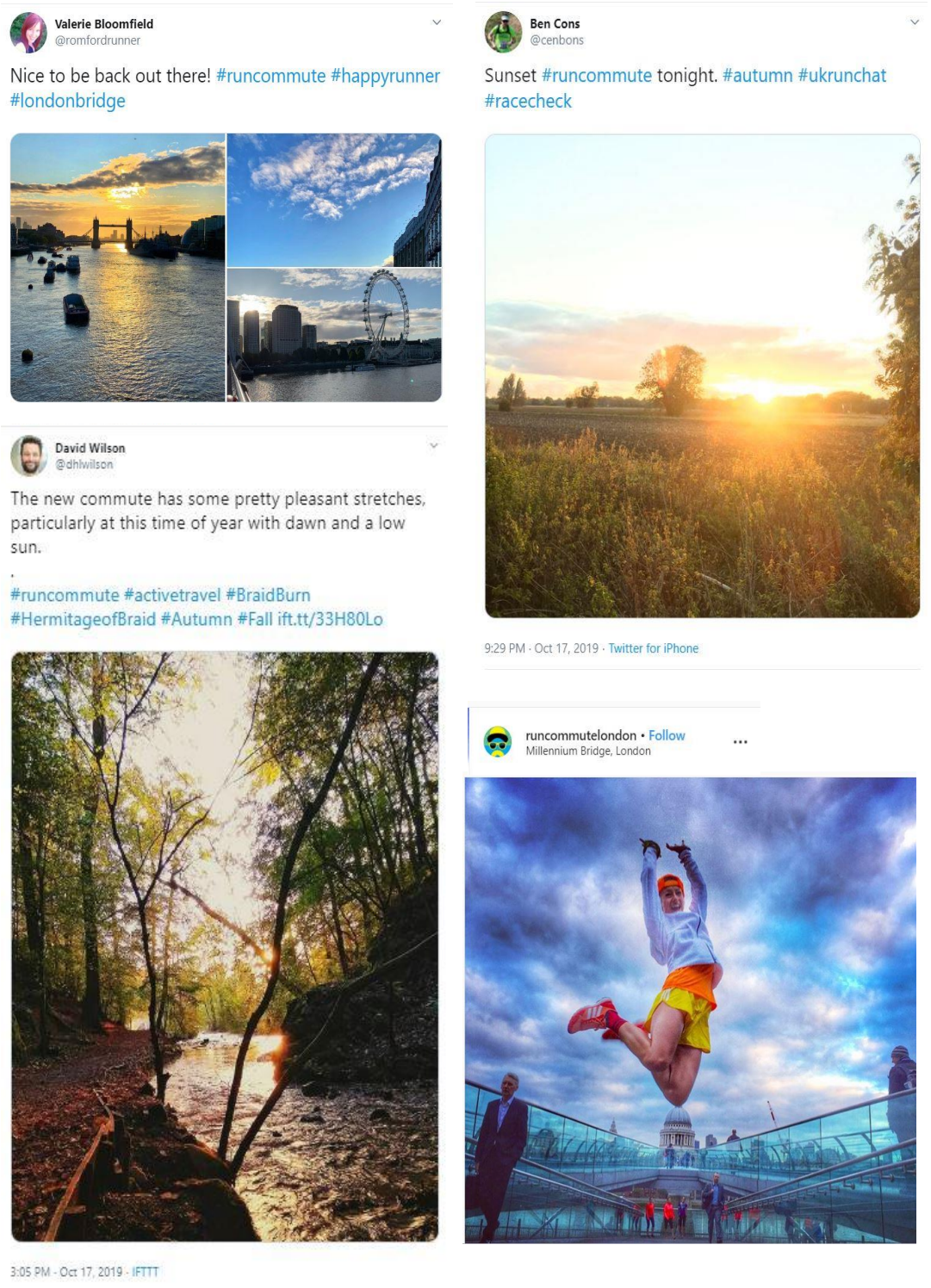
Run-commuters' preferences to route through green and blue spaces is closely tied to staging the experiences on their run. As shown above, many just prefer running in these spaces for their aesthetic value, something sensed with eyes, ears and noses. Combined with the flow and elemental reasons discussed previously, green and blue spaces have emerged as key sites for run-commuting, acting as highways for active commuting. Research into green and blue space exercise have illuminated the various mental and physical health benefits of exercising in these spaces (Cregan-Reid, 2014; Hitchings and Latham, 2017a; Bamberg et al, 2018; Donnelly and MacIntrye, 2019) and the ways nature is used as a resource for wellbeing by runners (MacBride-Stewart, 2019a). Here, however, experience is arguably run-commuters' biggest draw for incorporating these spaces so readily into their routes.

It is not just green and blue spaces in which run-commuters seek aesthetic value however, it is also found in the urban landscape and built environment. This may be related to the changing shape of run-commuting routes allowing new spaces to be ran through, or a re-appreciation of sites, spaces seen anew by running (see Jensen, 2013) that promotes this factor. Either way, many run-commuters explained their pleasure in passing famous landmarks and iconic sites on their route:

> **Carl:** Landmarks are some really good parts [of run-commuting in London]. That's an amazing novelty, first few times, to run past the Tower of London and be running along parts of the Shard and over big Tower Bridge and all of those things. You can live somewhere but never run past [such places].
>
> **Fiona:** Particularly this run I do, it's really nice. So I run past Tower Bridge, I run past St Paul's. You know, great scenes. And yeah, no. I do try and take them in and appreciate that as well.

The desire to take in and be in spaces with aesthetic value, whether more natural space or the built environment, has a large impact on the development of run-commuters' routes. They are often the preferred spaces to run in due to the staging they offer embodied experiences. This certainly has wider resonance beyond the participants in this project as photos of the aesthetic values of run-commuting routes are some of the most commonly shared run-commuting posts on social media (Figure 9.11). Unfortunately, there is not space here for a fuller exploration of the role of social media in run-commuting practices (though important), but arguably the sharing of these words and images are helping run-commuting practices to endure. As Hitchings and Latham (2016) demonstrate in relation to runners' preferences to run inside or outside, thinking, talking and sharing can be considered as modes of expression by which practices are established and sustained. In run-commuting, social media and the sharing of the aesthetics of the practice could be one such mode. Alongside the other benefits already discussed regarding green and blue spaces, such aesthetics mark them are highly influential spaces in the development of run-commuting routes. Run-commuters also regularly suggested that the availability of such spaces is one of the good things about run-commuting where they lived, and as such the presence and connectivity of green and blue spaces may be influential in the wider geographies of run-commuting.

Figure 9.11 Sharing the aesthetics of run-commuting on social media



This concludes the overview of key factors affecting run-commuters' routing choices. In seeking to stage their run-commuting experiences, run-commuters appear influenced both by factors related to running as a mode of transport and factors related to running as a leisure activity. There is a clear compromise occurring between the journey requirements and the running requirements/desires. Thus while some key considerations concern the embodied experience of running, such as flow, aesthetics and air quality, others could be considered more functional factors, such as directness and safety. The individual weighting run-commuters give to such factors is perhaps indicative of their perception of the wider practice of run-commuting and the realm it most clearly belongs to for them. Run-commuters' routes appear to be most greatly influenced by the flow, safety and experience of their running. As such, pedestrianised, green, blue and quieter spaces were all favoured by run-commuter in efforts to minimise interruptions, safety risks and pollution levels, and improve the aesthetic qualities of the route. What is also clear, however, is the fluctuating influence of some of these factors. As the time-spaces of the run-commuter alter, on diurnal, seasonal and annual cycles, spaces previously sought may now be avoided. The impact of darkness and poor weather were most notable here and resulted in a decreasing preference for green and blue spaces in winter, particularly parks and canals. As such, all of these factors, and their changing nature, are agents in the production of run-commuting. The addition of journey requirements to the routing decisions of run-commuters marks this process as different to the route choices of ordinary running. Other, more functional, factors come into play too and as such, the routing of run-commuters can be seen as a compromise between their embodied running desires and their utilitarian transport desires.

Run-commuters are certainly not unique in this negotiation between leisure and functional factors in route choices though. There are similarities that can be drawn to other active travel modes, particularly cycling. Research has similarly demonstrated the impact of safety, distance and flow on cycle-commuters' route choices (Broach et al, 2012). However, cyclists are also influenced more heavily by infrastructural provision for cycling, such as bike lane availability and quality (Howards and Burns, 2001; Stinson and Bhat, 2003; Heinen et al, 2010; Pucher et al, 2010). Run-commuters do not have such infrastructural offerings in the urban landscape. While this would be appreciated by some run-commuters in this study, such as a running lane in the streetscape, more commonly run-commuters appropriate spaces not specifically designed for them on their route in order to

stage their run-commuting. This is why their routing decisions and the factors affecting them have been so interesting to explore and this section has highlighted the key considerations being made regarding the development of run-commuting routes and the subsequent staging of run-commuting experiences.

Developing routes

The discussion around routes and routing presented so far within this chapter has generally concerned current run-commuting routes. As hinted at in some of the quotes, it is not the case that these have always been the routes run-commuters have used and this section will briefly explore the development and evolution of routes in run-commuting practices. With the emphasis on change held centrally in this project, this is a crucial element in understanding fluctuations within individual's practices as well as the practice as a whole. Such changes in routes often occur as these are new spaces being run through and run-commuters are still figuring out what they are like and whether they could better fulfil the balance between function and experience they are seeking. Thus, this section turns its attention, albeit succinctly, to the processes and considerations involved in the development of run-commuting routes, and consequently, the ongoing production of run-commuting itself.

There are two main stages I would like to explore in the development of run-commuting routes here. Firstly, is the initial route development. When someone first decides they want to run-commute, how do they choose the route and what considerations go into it? In some cases, the initial route chosen was informed from experience and knowledge gained from other transport modes. This could be current commuting routes that are being adapted for run-commuting, or wider mobility patterns they undertake. Within this process though, cycling was most influential in developing run-commuting routes. As shown in Chapter 6, run-commuters most commonly switch from cycling to uptake run-commuting and as such, their initial route development is strongly informed by the cycling routes they already undertake:

> **Holly:** The first time I [ran-commute] was from Canary Wharf and I didn't really have a clue where I was going, just running along the cycle superhighway cause that's the way I cycled. And I literally just followed my

cycle route and then got home and I was like, "Oh, check me out. I've just like run home, like some kind of ninja."

Sam: And I've been cycling for several years anyway, so I kinda knew… I went the same route roughly as my cycle route. Cycling's the same as running in a way that you want to avoid traffic, obviously you got to be on the road rather than the pavement, but you want the quietest route, basically.

Here we can see similarities in route desires between run-commuting and cycle-commuting becoming integral in the initial development of run-commuters' routes. For those who already cycled to work, many of the factors they would seek or avoid were being fulfilled by their cycling route, which would have also balanced the functional and leisure aspects of the practice. Therefore, it was obvious for those cycle-commuters starting to run-commute to stick with the same route, at least to begin with.

For those who were not influenced by other mobility practices and routes in the initial development of their route, another process was commonly undertaken. Mapping was often reported by run-commuters to help then devise their initial routes. Mapping routes is a common feature of running practices more widely, particularly with the rise of self-tracking and GPS-watches within running (Littlejohns et al, 2019; Esmonde, 2019), as it is within cycling practices (Barratt, 2017; Duggan, 2020) and walking practices (Laurier et al, 2016; Smith et al, 2020). Given the commonplace nature of using digital mapping tools to devise routes and navigate places, many run-commuters turned to such technologies when developing their initial routes:

Callum: I think I would've pre-mapped it. I remember mapping this one. But it'll just be Google Maps.

Malcolm: I think the reason I chose this route is because I kind of did the TFL [Transport for London] search about if you're walking between King's Cross and the Royal Free, what way you'd be going … The first time I did this route, I had to kind of keep checking my phone to see whether I was on the right track, but it was pretty straightforward.

For some then, initial route knowledge and route development is helped by digital mapping practices. Through such practices, run-commuters can identify the spaces they think will strike the right balance between function and leisure they need to

stage their embodied run-commuting experiences. For others, this pre-mapping was less virtual and informed by mental maps and route knowledge gained from other mobility practices.

These initial route developments rarely stayed totally the same with time however. Most run-commuters discussed route evolutions, which is the second process of route development this section seeks to highlight. As already hinted at in quotes above, run-commuters often tailor the routes initially developed to better fulfil their embodied desires:

> **Sam:** But you find new little shortcuts, more kind of when you get to town. So initially, it would be like running along the main thoroughfares, and then you find little side streets that almost run parallel to the thoroughfares but have got a lot less pedestrians, a lot less traffic on.

> **Simon:** So how long do you think it took to settle on this route we're doing now? How long from mapping it to tweaking it a little bit?

> **Carl:** I got a bit lost a few times over that way … yeah, a few times and that then leads to a slightly different way.

Here we can see that, by design or happy accident, many run-commuting routes evolve slightly over time as elements of the route are added and removed. This is generally less of a technological process and more one based on experience of running routes and discovering other options, which may better fulfil the desires of their route.

These could be considered as transformations of habits. Rarely sudden, more often gradual, run-commuters' routes have changed as their perception, experience and relation to their running spaces change. Whether slowly adapting cycling routes for running, or fine-tuning routes to stage better experiences, habits are transformational here as past actions feed into future movements (Bissell, 2014c). Drawing on Ravaisson, Bissell (2014c) argues that with repetition and time, habits transform movements and develop competencies. Movements once awkward become smooth. Under this light, the development of run-commuters' routes can be seen as transformation in habits of navigation and experience. The routes of run-commuters have been refined as the clumsiness, undesirability or unsuitability of past runs inform future changes, creating more desirable routes and experiences in

the process. In this way "*habit is the way that all movements stretch beyond themselves to condition future movements*" (Bissell, 2014c: p.488 emphasis in the original). Although a full history and account of run-commuters' routes was not acquired in the project, most participants spoke of either having a route or a handful of routes which they now undertake. This perhaps demonstrates a sedimentation of habits, where the transformative potential of habit wanes somewhat with satisfaction. This itself could breed further changes however and another peak in habitual transformations (Bissell, 2014c). For example, as the stimuli of the route – its landmarks, aesthetic value, quietness etc - become habituated to, run-commuters may become bored, missing the stimuli of running somewhere new and experiencing something different, which may then engender further changes to the route.

As such, the routes discussed in this chapter should not be seen as final and static. Nor, indeed, should they be seen as lines and paths that just exist, waiting to be ran. There are almost infinite options for connecting the spaces of work and home, and effort goes into the development of these routes, both in their initial development and in the development of habits that cause small evolutions of them, as run-commuters seek to tailor the staging of their run-commuting. Both digital mapping and knowledge gained from other mobilities are influential in these processes with previous cycling experiences proving integral to many run-commuters' route development. This, once more, demonstrates the interconnections between these practices and the various ways in which cycling helps to enable run-commuting. The development of routes not only provides evidence to the changing nature of run-commuting practices and the processual nature of mobility practices, but it also pays credence to the in-depth route and place knowledge run-commuters develop. This is an important element of the embodied experiences of run-commuting and will be explored further in Chapter 10. Run-commuters and run-commuting habits are altering and amending routes to better suit their practices and to heighten the benefits they gain from them, ultimately tailoring the staging of their embodied experiences and helping to produce run-commuting.

Conclusion

This chapter has illuminated the factors behind route choices and practices of routing within run-commuting. These are crucial elements in the production of run-commuting as routes channel run-commuters in conduits of mobility, which ultimately contribute to the from above, *in situ* staging that greatly affect embodied experiences of run-commuting. Routes are also a key point of difference between run-commuting and ordinary running, though with many crossovers. As an integral factor in staging experiences and enabling run-commuting, the importance of understanding what desires and requirements such routes need to satisfy was demonstrated in this chapter. This began with a discussion of what sort of running takes place on the run-commute and how it fits with participants' wider running practices. A great diversity was shown within this but with a pre-eminence of easier and more relaxed running, better equipped to deal with the difficulties present when running in the time-spaces of the commute. Other key factors affecting routing decisions were then explored and significantly highlighted the dual function of run-commuting. Run-commuting is a practice associated with both transport and leisure/exercise and, as such, factors relating to both of these coalesce in the development of run-commuting routes. Functional factors, such as the need to fulfil journey requires, directness and safety, were combined with more experiential factors, such as flow and aesthetics to compromise on a route that satisfies both elements of this run-commuting dichotomy. Ultimately, these factors result in run-commuters seeking out certain spaces on their route and seeking to avoid others. In particular, pedestrianised, green, blue and quieter spaces featured heavily in run-commuters' desires. These are time-specific, however, with many run-commuters reflecting on how spaces change throughout the day and year as darkness and weather fluctuations alter the desirability of these spaces.

This reflection on routing choices was also evident when discussing the development of run-commuting routes. This demonstrated the work that goes into staging desirable run-commuting experiences, and other transport experiences, digital mapping practices and habits were shown as important in aiding these processes. Cycling experiences, in particular, proved pivotal for many run-commuters whose initial routes were often based around their cycling routes. This is due to the heavy cross-overs in embodied desires between cycling and running and the complementary nature of both cycling and running to work. There are key

differences between the practices, however, with cycling having specific infrastructural provisions within the urban landscape, which running lacks. This is crucial as run-commuters, thus have to appropriate and share space not specifically devised for them. This not only impacts on routing decision but also the experiences had on the run and ultimately contributes to the production of run-commuting. The factors highlighted in this chapter could all be considered as agents in the production of run-commuting and their changing qualities and run-commuters' changing responses to these, are evidence of the processual nature of run-commuting.

Chapter 10

On the run

This chapter brings run-commuting to life more vividly and viscerally than it has been done so far in the thesis. Here, I turn my attention to what it is actually like to run-commute, the experience of running to work and considering how run-commuting takes places on the run itself. It deals with the same mobile spaces explored in the last chapter on routes. But whereas that chapter took interest in elements that stage from above, here we turn to staging from below, as Jensen (2013) would term it. Such doings are integral to all mobilities, they contribute to the production of mobile practices, subjects, subjectivities and spaces (Adey, 2017). In running, however, these elements seem heightened, both in their perception and significance. The body is more deeply enrolled into the performance and understanding of running, with increases in speed and effort resulting in a cacophony/harmony of rhythms that stimulates senses and engenders emotions. While present in all mobilities, this is strongly felt and desired in running practices, as widely reported in research (Allen-Collinson, 2005; 2008; 2010; Allen-Collinson and Hockey, 2011; Hockey, 2004; 2006; 2013; Lorimer, 2010; 2012; Shipway and Holloway, 2010; 2016; Tanio, 2012; Whelan, 2012; Barnfield, 2016a; 2016b; Edensor et al, 2018; Lev, 2019; Larsen, 2019). The pinnacle of this within running is perhaps the runner's high. The great running-geographer John Bale (2004: p.104) expresses this as a "euphoric sensation, of heightened well-being, an appreciation of nature and transcendence of time and space". While a potentially elusive state to achieve, the runner's high demonstrates the elevated embodiment apparent within running mobilities.

Barnfield (2016a) refers to this as the excessiveness of exercise, pertaining to how the heightened animation of the body is affected and becomes affective across numerous registers. This could be perhaps thought of as intense embodiment. Allen-Collinson and Owton (2015) and Larsen (2019) also conceptualise running this way, seeking to express the heightened sense of corporeal aliveness and strong invigoration of the senses that occur when running. Writing about intensity in relation to super-commuting experiences, Bissell et al (2017) offer three 'cuts' on intensity, which may be instructive here. They suggest intensity can be considered as a methodological device able to explore fine-grained qualitative differences, as a

quality of stimulation and the skills developed to manage such stimulation, and as a force capable of transforming and transforming differently. Thinking in this way about intensity as it pertains to the experience and liveliness of mobilities offers some ways into exploring how run-commuting perhaps sits apart from other running and commuting experiences.

As such, this chapter will concentrate predominantly on the aspects and intensities of experiences that are particular to run-commuting. I am wary that this may function to reify differences and cast run-commuting as other and apart, when in reality it is a highly entwined practice. I do so only to highlight unique aspects of run-commuting and where it may present changes to wider practices. Two such differences are particularly important to the discussions in this chapter. Firstly, run-commuting routes are likely to be more frequently ran than other running routes and therefore routine and habitual knowledge are likely to bear influence. Secondly, run-commuting bodies are likely to be more heavily encumbered than ordinary running bodies as the stuff of commuting moves with them. As such, this chapter begins with a discussion of the importance of enjoyment and pleasure within run-commuting practices, followed by a section on the experiences of running with a bag, analysing the impact of materiality and rhythm on run-commuting. While the full texture, liveliness and viscerality of run-commuting experiences extends much beyond these, they mark aspects where run-commuting experiences may diverge from ordinary running experiences and elements that become important in the production run-commuting.

Enjoyment and pleasure

As suggested by run-commuters' desires to stage nicer and better experiences in their routing choices shown in the last chapter, enjoyment and pleasure are at the heart of run-commuter's experiences. Simply, run-commuters generally enjoy run-commuting and this is a major facet in establishing and sustaining the practice. In this way, positive run-commuting experiences can generate further run-commuting. This is a cyclical process between mode choice and satisfaction, something also apparent in wider travel practices (De Vos et al, 2019). Pleasure is an easy element to overlook however. As Phoenix and Orr (2014) argue, pleasure is a forgotten and under-researched dimension of physical activity but is socially significant in

understanding and promoting healthy lifestyles (see also Pringle et al, 2015). Pleasure has a more fraught relationship with transport however. While many do enjoy their commutes and travel more generally, the stereotypical perception of the daily trip to work is one of drudgery, graft and grind and is regularly reported as unenjoyable (Bissell, 2018; Adam et al, 2018). This also marries up with the feelings of run-commuters in this study regarding commuting more widely (see Chapters 6 and 7). Despite the increasing attention to subjective wellbeing, satisfaction and happiness in transport studies (see Clark et al, forthcoming) pleasure remains something of a marginalised dimension in research, although activeness, sociability and communality have been shown to be effective here (Wild and Woodward, 2019; Chatterjee et al, 2020). In run-commuting, and running more widely, enjoyment and pleasure are essential to the practice and to apprehending it (Caudwell, 2015a) and thus may represent a change to usual commuting experiences for practitioners in this study at least.

Some of the pleasures of running exist in the outcomes of the run, in achievements, successes and goals that have been met. In competitive running this may concern gaining pleasure in personal bests and race positions (Bale, 2004), whereas in run-commuting these pleasurable achievements are more likely to regard time-efficiency, life-balance and improved mental/physical wellbeing. These after-the-fact pleasures of run-commuting are important, and were explored in Chapters 6 and 7, however this section will focus on two further sets of pleasures. These are pleasures-in-motion and the enjoyment derived from being on the run itself. Firstly, somatic pleasure and the enjoyment of being a body in motion. Secondly, a geographical pleasure of habitual engagement with places on the run. These pleasures are both innate to run-commuting and borne in relation to the alternative experiences run-commuters could be having, thus marking them as important in the production of run-commuting.

Somatic pleasure

The act of being in motion can generate pleasures and enjoyment, something run-commuters find intensifies with the increased efforts of running. This may seem a bit off. Running can be a physically exhaustive and difficult form of mobility and there are many that hate running for these reasons (see Bale, 2008). While other forms

of work-related mobility can, likewise, be exhaustive (Straughan et al, 2020), this is generally not regarded as a good thing in commuting practices and the principle of least effort has widely been used to understand people's mobility choices (Bahrami and Rigal, 2017). Yet, for many runners, there is pleasure in this movement and effort:

> **Sam:** I think you have to have a high pain threshold to want to be a runner. I meet people that, running is anathema to them. They don't understand why anyone would want to do it and they just say that it hurts. And you've got to get past that as a runner. You've got to almost kind of enjoy that, really.

Sam's sentiment that the pain and exhaustion of running can be a perverse form of pleasure has been mirrored widely elsewhere (see Bale, 2004) and about other active mobilities (Spinney, 2006) but Lev (2019) argues that finding pleasure in such movement is a process that becomes more attuned with experience. Here, the habit of running transforms bodies' competence for running, making the movements easier and less painful. As such, many run-commuters do not report such discomfort when running their commute, something also aided by the lower-effort running they undertake the majority of the time.

Run-commuters mostly reported experiencing pleasure when running and pleasure being in motion. This can be considered as a somatic pleasure, derived from movement and sensing the body in motion, common across many physical cultures (see Spinney's 2006 and Caudwell's 2015b evocations of these pleasures in cycling and rowing respectively). This was often eluded to and hinted at by participants, such as Holly who stated "Oh god I really, really love it and I can't believe that it's free and feels so good." Sadly, deeper articulations of such pleasures were not offered by participants in this project. They commonly articulated the enjoyment they get from the impacts of such intense embodiment, such as mental wellbeing, but did not unpack the pleasures of motion itself in more depth:

> **Holly:** You get … a buzz after you've done it … I think it's probably just like being kind of tired through exercise and being in the fresh air. At the end of the day … you feel a bit like cooped up because you've been in an office, and then you run and you move your body and you think about like how you're moving your body and your brain kind of relaxes.

Somatic intensities and consuming the body in motion is at the root of this and there are hints of the pleasure derived from such kinaesthesia in this quote. However, a deeper articulation of such somatic pleasures was not forthcoming from participants in this study. Undoubtedly, these can be difficult aspects to talk about. In their study of aesthetics experiences of running, Maivorsdotter and Quennerstedt (2012) analyse the poetic writings of Haruki Murakami's (2009) running memoir as a means to overcome such difficulties, whereas I hoped that the use of go-along interviews may work similarly in this project (Anderson, 2004). Perhaps in increasing the intensity of mobility by taking go-along interviews on the run, however, diminishing returns have been experienced. One of Bissell et al's (2017) cuts on intensity regards the qualities of stimulation and the skills developed to cope with these. Running-commuting is a hugely stimulating practice and the addition of an interview that seeks to interrogate these stimuli was perhaps beyond the skills some participants had developed. Comments by participants on the difference, and sometimes difficulties, of running and talking with someone were not rare, especially when fatigued:

> **Holly:** I feel like— I don't normally talk when I run, so it takes a while to adjust to the rhythm of breathing and talking.
>
> **Sam:** Well, our pace was 9:10 [minutes per mile] … that's loads slower. I think because we were talking, it didn't really feel particularly slow. I'm quite surprised that… I thought we were running maybe about 8, 8:15 pace.

User error is also at play here. I would similarly have been subject to finding the limits of my intensive skills while interviewing on the run. As I have written about elsewhere (Cook, 2020), the enormity of things to do, stimuli to respond to, and movements to make on a running interview was often overwhelming. There were commonly places I wished I had questioned further but in the moment I did not have the capacity or wherewithal to do so. Conducting run-along interviews adds extra layers of intensity for all parties, and in this case, it was to the detriment of deeper and more vivid articulations of participants' somatic pleasures.

Despite its somewhat hazy verbalisation, somatic pleasures are important dimensions of the running experience. It is something I found important to my own run-commuting practices. Particularly after a day confined between a chair and the desk, I found myself craving movement. I derive pleasure from feeling my muscles and senses pushed and come alive, feeling them suffer and stressed, feeling them expand and contract and find their limits. It is like a spark to my system and

conscious, feeling my body move, battle with itself and respond to the world around. It wasn't always euphoric, it was sometimes painful, but it made me feel like a human with a living, breathing, vulnerable and working body. As I write this, after 18 months of forced stasis following an accident and recovery, my body does not feel this and this kinaesthesia is what I miss most. The intensity of experience, and sometimes hard work, of run-commuting permits these sensations to be gained in compressed fashion. Given the time-poor nature of many run-commuters, this was a welcome and time-efficient pleasure.

Jayne Caudwell (2015a) has written further about the pleasures derived from the intensities of running movements and their enrolling of the visceral and sensate. Somatic pleasures are registered through kinaesthesia, nocioception, proprioception, equilibrioception and thermoception, allowing bodies to sense movement, pain, muscles and organs, balance and heat (Paterson, 2009; Larsen, 2019). They combine to offer pleasure and enjoyment in motion, with Caudwell declaring that the "the flow of movement is infectious" (2015a: p.111). Elsewhere, Sarah Nettleton has referred to this as an "embodied intoxication" (2015a: p.124) and a "somatic aesthetic" of running that "breeds existential capital, an embodied gratification that serves as an attractor that binds those who appreciate feelings of being alive" (2015b: p.759 see also Nettleton, 2013). Most run-commuters would agree, and despite the pain and exhaustion this form of movement can result it, the majority derive great pleasure in it (Lev, 2019). Unlike other forms of commuting where minimal effort is desired, here we see how effortful movements can work to entrain mobile practices, rather than inhibit them (Bahrami and Rigal, 2017) as practitioners seek the pleasures they provide.

Geographical pleasure

The second pleasure this section explores is one of geography. By this, I am referring to the enjoyment run-commuters derive from engaging deeply with place as they run and the intimate mobile sense of place they develop (see Edensor, 2014). Although having discussed the routes of run-commuting as staging from above, this is not one-way agency. The staging from below that embodied running practices perform with places are co-constitutive, they affect and change one another. While space and place are central to all running practices, from attunement to place

through regular running routes (Hockey, 2004; Lorimer, 2012; Allen-Collinson and Hockey, 2015; Edensor et al, 2018) to the more spectacular engagements with place in running events and tourism (Sheehan, 2006; Cidell, 2014; Hinch and Kono, 2018; Larsen, 2019), running on the commute offers something a little different. Although rarely done every day, there is a habitualness to run-commuting routes that is less apparent in other running practices. While runners are likely to have the same repertoire of routes they regularly run, they are unlikely to be as routine as their route between work and home. This familiarity breeds an intimate place knowledge apparent among run-commuters, who apprehend the places they run with in, sometimes, minute detail:

> **Malcolm:** I think increasingly aware. On the way back, there's a slippery patch when you go off from Camden onto the canal. There's a bit which is very, very dark and you have to be very careful because it's a very narrow tunnel you need to go through. You get familiar with your crossings and things like that, absolutely. I think that initially you don't really know what you're doing, but it's quite quick you get a feel for the route.
>
> **Mia:** I mean, one of the nice things about running so often is you always know how far in you are … there are certain trees … a couple of cherry trees which, in a few months time, will be absolutely laden [with blossom]. And there's some bushes back there and just along here. You kind of get used to where the wildlife is and there's usually a heron back there and you know normally what days it's going to smell dreadful going past the dump … it's normally on a Tuesday.
>
> **Holly:** I'll normally have like a minute up here [the top of Primrose Hill, London] and just kind of look at the foreign tourists and kind of, "Oh, this is nice. This is nice." And then it changes, like obviously in the summer it looks different and tons of people everywhere with cans of beer. And then autumn, it's like really romantic. So it's quite nice. It's good.

Getting a feel for the route, as Malcom describes, includes run-commuters taking stock of a kaleidoscopic inventory of place dimensions: from slippery floors, bottlenecks, and illumination to wildlife, people and air, and taking in registers related to surfaces, geometry, the elemental, nature, light, climate, sociality and the sensate. Similarly visible here is run-commuters' sensitivity to how places change and intersect with other rhythms of life. This demonstrates that run-commuters develop an impressive mundane knowledge of the places they run through, as also

revealed by Hockey (2004), due to the habitualness of routes, which seems particularly refined within run-commuting practices. Many participants reflected that this facet of their practice is in contrast to other commuting experiences, which somehow seem more disconnected from place:

> **Tyler:** I quite like watching the changing of the seasons. I feel more in touch with what's going on, really. [When not run-commuting] you're kind of in a metal box from your house to work. It feels like you're living in a bubble, a little bit. I spend a third of my run-commute going through by the riverside, so I get to catch the changing of the seasons.

It is not just a case of having such a close relationship with place however, many run-commuters actively enjoy and get pleasure from such engagement, as noticeable in Mia's quote above. This is a different pleasure to the one derived from the aesthetic value of places as seen in Chapter 9 (also see Caudwell, 2015a). For many run-commuters, the regular running of their commutes leads to a particular attunement to place that they derive pleasure in. Here, run-commuting serves as a way to see places anew - to retune, re-orientate and renew their relationships with the places they commute with.

> **Holly:** I'm seeing London through different eyes.
>
> **Mia:** It's a great way of seeing the world. So I found that … everything is in sort of this super high-high-definition slow-motion, and it's just the way of experiencing the world on a level that you don't get to normally … You get this whole different appreciation for how far a mile is, and the difference between dropped kerbs and not dropped kerbs. By the way, dropped kerbs are wonderful. But you'll never find this out unless you're like, 10-miles into a really rubbish run.

While repetition and routine are certainly important in these attunements, it is not just regularity that alters senses of place in this way. As particularly noticeable in Mia's quote, there is something about the affective experience of running involved here. There is a sense that the physical consumption of the body in motion and the intense embodiment it offers work to alters the relationship between runner and place. As Barnfield (2016a) suggests, moving can generate immersive sensibilities and connections with spaces. It is perhaps intensity's abilities to transform, as suggest by Bissell et al (2017), that is at play here. For many run-commuters, this unique and intense embodiment not only brings pleasure but also transforms their

relation, inhabitation and perceptions of place. It is thus, not only a key dimension of run-commuting practices but also serves to motivate and entrain run-commuting too.

Not enjoyable or pleasurable

This being said, run-commuting is not always enjoyable or pleasurable. At least, not all of the time. The techniques and skills run-commuters' bodies have learnt to cope with the stimulation from running's intense embodiment may give way and be overwhelmed, injury could strike or motivation could lapse. In these instances, kinaesthesia and engagement with place may lose their shine and not impart the pleasure they usually do. For most, these are rare occurrences and do not dampen their enjoyment of the practice as a whole, just that individual journey. Only a couple of participants in this project spoke of actual or potential displeasure in run-commuting, and in doing so revealed some reasons why this may be. The first, was the frequency of run-commuting potentially leading to boredom:

> **Simon:** Do you enjoy run-commuting?
>
> **Carl:** Yeah, sometimes … When I only ran to and from work for five days, there were some where it's like, "Oh, I don't really want to do this," and I still got to go and do it.

Most run-commuters do not run every day, most run much less than that. Therefore, the novelty and difference of run-commuting experiences generally still seem appealing and pleasure can be gained from them. However, it could be posited from the above conversation with Carl, that for higher frequency run-commuters diminishing returns set in, the pleasures of run-commuting become habituated to and run-commuting can become another monotonous, mundane journey to undertake.

The second reason for displeasure with run-commuting experiences stems not from running too much, but being new to running:

> **Lisa:** The last few weeks is the only time I've actually enjoyed running. It's horrific. Everything feels wrong. I can't breathe. I feel like I'm dying. I have to concentrate so hard on not stopping. … I just can't bear it. And then I might have a few moments where I feel like, "Oh, I'm running quite

> automatically. This feels like a thing I can do. That's quite a less unpleasant sensation—I wouldn't say it's pleasant." But then the last few weeks, I've enjoyed seeing myself get better and faster and feeling more competent. I think it's feeling competent that's starting to make something that might be enjoyment maybe in a few weeks time … I think it's sort of mostly tolerable, but I am enjoying it the better I get at it.

In Lisa's vivid account is a demonstration of the processual nature involved in deriving pleasure in running. Lev (2019) argues that it can take time to experience positive sensations and emotions towards the more effortful and intensely embodied mobility of running, something we can see as habits transforming. Apparent within this, once more, is the idea of intensity concerning the qualities of stimulation and the development of skills to cope with those. At present, Lisa is arguably in a transition period. By her own account, she is developing the running skills, techniques and capacities to not be overwhelmed by running that are not yet ingrained in Lisa. Run-commuting was inundating and intense, in a bad way. Through experience however, the skills to deal with these stimuli and their qualities are being developed and the displeasure of run-commuting is subsiding. While this would be true for anyone new to running, not just run-commuting, it does demonstrate some of the physical limitations regarding who could derive pleasure from run-commuting.

This section has demonstrated the importance of enjoyment and pleasure in run-commuting practices. While not universal or ubiquitous, run-commuting is largely an enjoyed practice and this pleasure not only forms a motive for starting run-commuting but acts to sustain people's practices too. The centrality of pleasure to run-commuting is one further way in which it blurs the boundaries of transport and leisure, with pleasure generally being considered a dimension of the latter. Furthermore, pleasure is also crucial to understanding the experience of run-commuting and this chapter has demonstrated two in-motion pleasures of run-commuting commonly reported by participants. The first was a somatic pleasure derived from the sensory and effortful movements of run-commuting. The second was a geographical pleasure regarding the intimate relationships and re-orientations to place that engaging in routine intense embodiment on the commute offers. While apparent in many running practices, the heightened habitualness of run-commuting routes intensified this phenomenon and sets it apart from other commuting experiences, which seem somehow more withdrawn from the spaces around them.

Together these aspects demonstrate the importance of attending to pleasurable dimensions in both mobilities and physical cultural studies, something which has been marginal hitherto. Thinking about these pleasures through the perspectives of intense embodiments has been informative. All three cuts of intensity suggested by Bissell et al (2017) have resonated with the experiences documented in this section. The qualitatively different experiences between run-commuting and other commuting practices due to the intensity of movement helped highlight where run-commuting pleasures and experiences diverge from those had otherwise. Understanding intensity as the quality of stimulation and the skills developed to cope with these helped explain how most run-commuters derive pleasure from the intense embodiment of running rather than pain, even if these stimuli can become overwhelming at times. Lastly, understanding intensity as a force for transformation aided insights into how the changing relationships between run-commuters and place are mediated through intense embodiments. As such, this section has demonstrated the intensely embodied nature of run-commuting and the pleasures derived in this that function to motivate, sustain and produce run-commuting as a distinct practice.

Running with a bag

Revisiting Lisa's vivid description of running displeasures above, we get a sense of what it feels like when bodies struggle to manage the intensity of running. Runners' bodies are in a delicate equilibrium, a balance between embodied stimuli and the body's capacities to manage these positively. This equilibrium can easily be disrupted however, should the two sides of this equation become unbalanced. Should the qualities or quantities of the stimuli change, such as weather, surfaces, or encounters for example, or the bodily skills of runners decrease, through fatigue, rustiness or injury for example, then a tipping point can be reached where the embodied experiences of run-commuting transitions, potentially to one of displeasure.

This is a useful context within which to think about the topic of this section, running with a bag. A bag is the defining object of run-commuting. It is also a controversial one, capable of sparking impassioned responses from runners. A bag is not a usual running object, outside of the ordinary running accoutrements for most (excepting

ultra runners) and the potential need to wear one for run-commuting marks this as a distinguishing feature. Run-commuting's function as a mode of transport can necessitate that stuff moves as well as people. Given the limited carrying capacities of runners in motion, a bag, and by extension the body, is often the solution to these cargo needs. Bags are crucial in the logistics of run-commuting. They speak to the multi-modal and multi-purpose assemblages of run-commuters who are not only moving as runners, but also as public transport users and employees, replete with the stuff needed for each and to transition between them. Although many run-commuters will stretch the cargo-load of their run-commutes more widely than any single trip (see Chapter 7 and 8), a bag is still (usually) imperative for the objects that need to travel between home and work daily with the runner themselves. Accordingly, a bag has almost come to signify run-commuting too. The burgeoning of run-commuting media articles over recent years is generally accompanied by images of runners bedecked with backpacks, becoming something of a caricature (Figure 10.1). Run-commuters can generally be identified by their use of bags while running during commuting periods, something I utilised as part of the recruitment strategy for this project. In these ways, bags have become a defining trait of run-commuting, crucial to the logistics and happening of the practice as well the depiction and signification of run-commuting. It is also interesting to note that all of the below images show the run-commuters as predominantly white and male. This could suggest a wider recognition of the demographics and politics of the practice highlighted in Chapter 5.

Running materialities

However, bags' affect run-commuting and run-commuters much more widely than this, they are an integral dimension of the intense embodiment of run-commuting for those who use them. They become an additional stimulus with its own qualities the body needs to respond to in its arsenal of coping skills. The affectivity of objects and stuff has been an important trope of research into mobilities, considering how mobile experiences are "composed of complex, differentiated materialities: materialities that have different qualities, different properties, different capacities, and are formed of different relations" (Adey et al, 2014: p.265). This turn to the material within mobility studies has been inspired partly by relational approaches (Jensen et al, 2019) and also form core elements of two of the frameworks guiding

Figure 10.1 Media caricatures of run-commuters with bags

Top Left: Campanario, 2015

Top Right: Liddiard, 2018

Bottom: Driver, 2019

my approach, that of Jensen (2013) and Shove et al (2012). This work shows that objects have the agency to mediate and transform embodied experiences of movement. Bissell's (2009) work on everyday encumbrance in railway stations nicely demonstrates this. Bissell shows that the mobile objects people move with function to facilitate or encumber movements by extending bodies and impressing limitations. He employs the term mobile prosthetics to encapsulate this extending of the body by mobile objects, becoming assemblages of body-object configurations which alter the capacities of the body and affective experiences had.

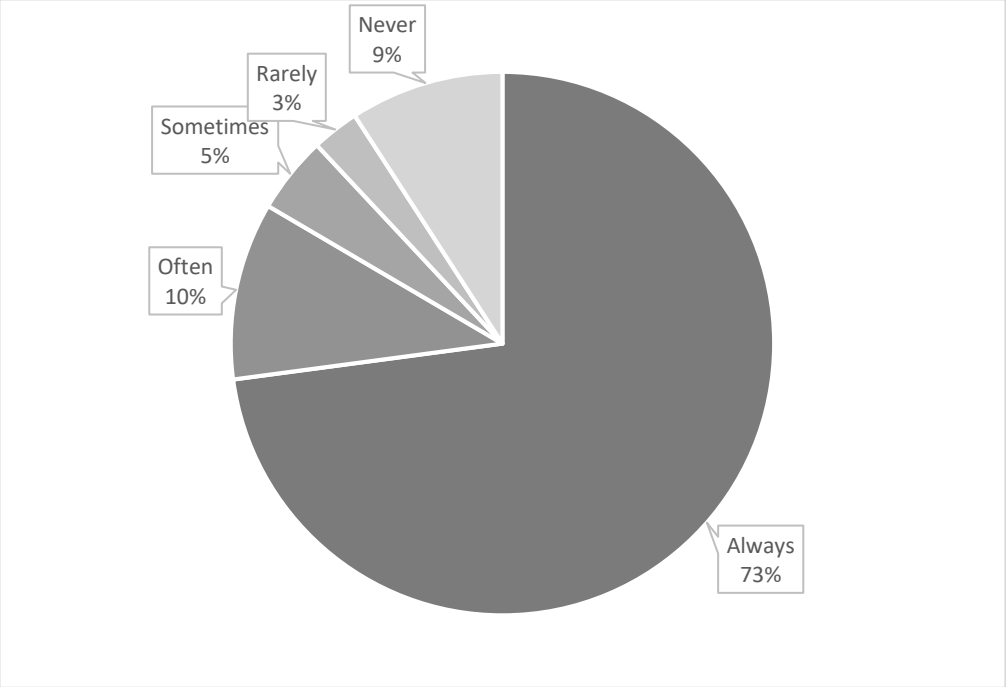
Given the intense embodiment of running, the quantity and mass of prostheses compared to rail passengers are likely to be less but their affectivity is highly significant. Shoes, clothing, headphones and wearable devices are some of the mobile prosthetics within running assemblages that affect movements and experiences (see Seuter et al, 2017; Edensor et al, 2018; Latham and Layton, 2020). As Barnfield (2016a) argues, the objects of running are inseparable from runners and are agents in the production of running. In run-commuting however, there is more stuff. The quantity and quality of this stuff is distinctly different to ordinary running as the mobile prosthetics are not only related to accomplishing and experiencing running but in enabling run-commuting and meeting the different requirements of departure and arrival locations. Once more, run-commuting's position between the spheres of transport and leisure is influential here, constructive of new body-object configurations with different affectivity. Of these, the bag is most prominent and remarkable. Yet it is something of an unknown quantity in running practices. The one paper that has studied the impact of bag-use on running so far (Scheer et al, 2019) has done so from a sport science perspective, exploring the energy costs of running with a bag rather than the lived experiences of running with this particular mobile prosthetic, which this chapter is interested in understanding.

Bag-use among run-commuters

Despite its representation as a signifier of run-commuting, it should not be presumed that bag-use is common among all run-commuters. The rate of bag-use among current run-commuters can be seen in Figure 10.2. As this demonstrates, while extremely widespread, the addition of this mobile prosthesis is not universal

or ubiquitous. As such, it should be recognised that the experiences of running with a bag reported in the rest of this chapter are not central to the experience of run-commuting for everyone, all the time.

Figure 10.2 Bag-use rates by current run-commuters



The reasons why some run-commuters do not use a bag in their run-commuting practices is often a matter of experience rather than purely lacking the need for one. The topic of running with a bag is a contentious one among runners and something that can elicit strong reactions. For many who run-commute without a bag, a dislike of the experience of running with a bag and the prospect of doing it informs this decision:

> **Harriet:** I have run with a rucksack before. I don't particularly like it and I'd rather not basically … It's not comfortable. Everything's like banging about.

> **Holly:** I tried it once before and it was just a massive pain in the arse. I don't like the idea of being restricted, and the one that I had, I didn't find it was that comfortable … It just feels like quite constricted and things would move around and jangle around and stuff. Like, even when my keys jangle it drives me insane. Having loads of stuff in my bag would be like, ugh … I feel

> like maybe if I ran with a bag on, I'd be a bit like, "That's work on my back." Because it'd have my work clothes in or it'd have something to do with work, so I'd be like, "Oh my god, I can't escape. It's literally on my back".

The transformative agency of the bag is visible here. For Harriet and Holly, this particular body-technology assemblage takes on a negative connotation of encumbrance in a physical and psychological sense. It constricts, imprints, jangles and bangs, resulting in uncomfortable and undesired experiences. The development of other logistics routines to get around needing to wear a bag, such as the stuff-only commutes discussed earlier in the thesis, is clearly one solution to this. For others however, this may not be possible or may not negate their need for the additional cargo capacity a bag offers. While this acts as a barrier to run-commuting uptake for some, it also begs the question of how the vast majority of run-commuters experience running with a bag and cope with the experiences described above. As perceptible in the above quotes, much of the affective materiality of a bag is a matter of rhythm and rhythmic affects/effects. To better apprehend the impact of running with a bag, a quick detour to explore running rhythms would be useful.

Running rhythms

Looking back at the quotes from Harriet and Holly above once more, a clear rhythmicity or maybe arrhythmia comes through. The issues they take with the affectivity of a bag concern constriction, banging and jangling, all terms with rhythmic connotations. This suggests the affectivity of running with a bag is most readily perceived by runners' rhythmic registers, and something worthy of further exploration. Rhythm is central to running practices and a recent spate of research analysing running through the concept of rhythm is testament to its worth in understanding running experiences (Larsen and Edensor, 2018; Edensor et al, 2018; Larsen, 2019).

Rhythm is a temporal dimension concerning starts, stops, cycles, tempos, repetitions, patterns and differences. Rhythmanalysis, as set forth by Lefebvre (2004), is an approach to understanding everyday life through a receptivity to such dimensions and how they affect and structure. It is both an analysis of rhythms – bodily, social, elemental, daily, economic, cultural, political etc – and analysis through rhythms, utilising rhythms to shed light of spaces, places, bodies and life. It

has predominantly been used to understand place rhythms, how they are reproduced and reconstituted by the processes that flow through it, and how bodies sense, embody and respond to these rhythms (Mels, 2004; Edensor, 2014; Larsen, 2019). These perspectives have been applied fruitfully to the analysis of running mobilities in recent years, and indeed could make important contributions to understanding the experience of run-commuting through analysing the enmeshing of running bodies and external rhythms that may encumber and affect. For example, articulations of the rhythmic impacts of encountering mobile others and the need to stop on the run were commonplace in this project, but their significance on running experiences will need unpacking elsewhere.

For understanding the intense embodiment of running with a bag, these rhythms are less influential and the significance of corporeal rhythms greater. These have received less attention in rhythmanalysis, which has generally considered how bodies engage with external rhythms rather than their own. Jonas Larsen's (2019) fleshy ethnography of the bodily and biological rhythms entangled in Etape Bornholm, a five day running event in Denmark, has recently rectified this however. He shows how running can be considered as a polyrhythmic ensemble in which runners' internal, corporeal, somatic, and biological rhythms are held central to the embodiment of that practice (Carter, 2018; Larsen, 2019).

Such understandings are not just academic analyses however. Runners in this study readily recognised the concept of rhythm and rhythmic experiences as important to their practice too:

> **Carl:** I would say when you get into a rhythm, your effort level can just really come down and just swing your arms and your legs and listen to what you're listening to or think about whatever your head takes you, and then really you're just like, not really thinking about running here. Whereas if it stops and starts, you're always like, looking left, looking right, "Oh, I've stopped here now. Gotta accelerate again." It's much harder.

While Carl's account reveals many insights into runners' understanding of rhythm, perhaps most important for understanding running with a bag is Carl's construction of rhythm as an achievement or a particular state. Rather than seeing all running experiences as rhythms, participants in this study generally talked about finding their rhythm during a run. This implies there is an optimal rhythmic ensemble for each runner when the rhythms of legs swings, arm raises, breaths and heartbeats are all in harmony, resulting in positive experiences. This rhythmic alignment could be

considered as running eurhythmia and the quest for this can be a constant one. Runners often describe a continual evaluation of their internal somatic rhythms. These rhythms are often apprehended and evaluated by listening to the body (Barnfield, 2016b; Samson et al, 2017) and a technological listening where self-tracking technologies provide abstract data that runner's entwine with their embodied experiences to evaluate their rhythmic ensemble (Lupton, 2016; Neff and Nafus, 2016; Little, 2017; Toner, 2018; Esmonde, 2019, Littlejohns et al, 2019). In these varied processes of finding their rhythm, and maybe losing it again, runners are experiencing arrhythmia and a body out of flow, when the experience is not so pleasant (Larsen, 2019). As such, eurhythmia could be considered as an embodied desire of run-commuters who want experiences marked by flow and rhythmic alignment.

These rhythmic concepts and understandings offer an important way of apprehending the experiences of running with a bag. They raise the question of what impact the addition of a bag to the polyrhythmic ensemble of run-commuting has, and how it transforms the experience of run-commuting in the process. I contend that for the affective materiality of running with a bag to be grasped, a sensitivity to rhythm is required.

Experiences of running with a bag

Having established the materiality of mobile objects as affective in facilitating and encumbering mobile experience, and rhythms as perhaps the most significant register where this would be felt in running practices, this section now more squarely explores the embodiment of running with a bag. The intense embodiment of run-commuting and fragility of running rhythms entails that any additions to the running assemblage could have disproportionate and arrhythmic impacts. My own running rhythms now include a wonky right arm that swings circularly rather than the usual forward and back, a legacy of my body's rhythms counteracting the weight of a water bottle I carried on longer runs. As such, the impact of stuff on a runner's body is not trivial and can impress themselves longer term.

The general consensus on running with a bag from participants in this study is one of tolerability. Very few actively enjoyed running with a bag but most were able to tolerate it for the facilitation it offered their run-commuting. This is not to say that

run-commuters do not have their gripes about wearing a bag or are unware of the bodily implications. These were regularly discussed as (potentially) disruptive to their running rhythms in a few key ways.

Most run-commuters found the experience of running with a bag at least slightly disruptive to their usual rhythms and experiences. This was due to the impacts on their extant running rhythms and the new rhythms introduced by the bag itself. Taking disrupting bodily rhythms to begin with, consider these perspectives from participants:

> **Fiona:** Find it a bit restrictive … makes me feel a bit heavier … I quite like the kind of freedom of just running and not being constrained by anything.
>
> **Dominic:** I think for me it's just the restrictive nature of it … So the bag I've got, it's got shoulder straps, a chest strap and a waist strap, and occasionally, the waist strap, even when it's loose, it still catches me and it doesn't wind me, but I'm conscious of it … For example, if I was running into the wind, I just felt like I was a much bigger target for the wind to catch.
>
> **Lisa:** It's pulling me back … I'll probably hunch forward a bit to counteract it, because I do tend to get shoulder ache.
>
> **Mia:** Initially, it's just having that extra weight and even that slight kind of constriction around your torso. Changes the way you breathe. So it's almost kind of having to re-teach my shoulders to relax.

There are a range of rhythms visible here that run-commuters explain are knocked out of kilter by the addition of the bag. Many found bags, their weight, straps and materiality to be restrictive to their usual bodily movements. They are unable to access the usual range of movements they typically can and report a loss of freedom in their motion because of it. Others reported changes to their bodily form and rhythm to accommodate the bag, such as hunching forward. For me, I find a running with a bag affects the bounciness of my gait, I run flatter as my body adjusts to the bag. Moreover, biological rhythms were also affected with some reporting a retuning of the respiratory rhythms to acclimatise to the bag, while others reflected the increased stress on the cardiovascular and muscular-skeletal rhythms, as they are required to work harder due to the additional weight of the bag. It is clear that as a mobile prosthetic, a bag causes arrhythmia within the polyrhythmic ensemble of the runner, something that could be thought of as a disorienting experience (Bissell and Gorman-Murray, 2019). We sense from these quotes that run-

commuters' usual flows and rhythms are becoming undone by the mobile-material encounter with a bag. They are losing their orienting relations to the movements of running through this encounter leading to a discoordination or possible disintegration of usual rhythms (Bissell and Gorman-Murray, 2019). As such, running with a bag is often perceived as an encumbrance with negative effects on the experience of run-commuting.

This is not a one-way agency however. The bag does not only effect but is also affected by running too as body-object configurations spring into motion. Running imparts a rhythm onto the bag, forcing it to move and respond to the motions of the wider run-commuting assemblage. The bag's rhythm is often incongruous with other running rhythms, causing the eurhythmic state to be strayed from:

> **Dominic:** It would just bounce up and down … if it was moving about … I'm having to hold the strap, which means my arms aren't moving. It's just not a comfortable motion.

There are cacophonous rhythms here. The bouncing and jangling of the bag as the body's rhythms force it to move while still docked to run-commuters' backs causes disruption and displeasure for practitioners. Although generally comfortable when stationary or walking, the bag can become at odds with the body when experiencing the intense embodiments on running. This speaks to the mutability of mobile objects (Bissell, 2009), which change shape when on the move and inscribe themselves onto the body in doing so. Two inscriptions in particular were reported by run-commuters as an outcome of the cacophonous bag and body rhythms - one caused by the friction and the other heat:

> **Sam:** My first run-commute was with a huge backpack on … the thing that I noticed was I got like chafing around my neck. As it would bounce up and down, it would rub and you do a run and you get a blister.

> **Lisa:** It smells really offensive. Doesn't matter how many times I wash it. It's like, I wouldn't wear kit that smelt that bad. I'd throw the kit away. But I can't afford to throw away a £100 bag.

The impressions the disruptive rhythms of the bag can have on a runner can be painful and enduring, as well as sensually uncomfortable, particularly in regards to thermoception (see Allen-Collinson and Owton, 2015; Hockey and Allen-Collinson, 2019). But here we also see the co-constitution and affective materiality of both bodies and objects. The heat caused from the weight, friction and lack of ventilation

involved in wearing a bag can cause sweaty bodies, which impart odours and aromas back on to the bag. As a body-prosthetic assemblage, run-commuting can be a disruptive, uncomfortable and unenjoyable experience. The normal eurhythmia of running can be sent into arrhythmia as the polyrhythmic ensemble is affected by and seeks to accommodate an additional object and its weight, materiality, rhythms and constrictions. This does not appear to be a particularly harmonious concert of rhythms showing the materiality of bags to be constraining to run-commuting experiences.

However, as noted at earlier, most run-commuters find running with a bag a tolerable thing. Although no one declared a liking for running encumbered in this way, most spoke of becoming accustomed to running with a bag:

> **Callum:** I'm so used to it. I don't really think about it anymore. Initially, I was, oh yeah, bit more aware of it but not anymore.
>
> **Mia:** Oh yeah. We've got to know each other.

This could be considered as an isorhythmic eurhythmia, where a similar rhythmic quality to ordinary running has been reached, just at a different pitch. Although the differences to ordinary running rhythms and experiences are easily perceptible (and often negative in comparison), a different eurhythmia has been settled on when running with a bag as the body and the bag have 'got to know each another'. This is a form of fluid apprehension important in everyday mobile encumbrance (Bissell, 2009) and could also be contemplated as the development of skills, caused by transforming habits, capable of coping with the qualities offered by stimuli of intense embodiment (Bissell et al, 2017).

This section has demonstrated the disruptive rhythms of running with a bag and the consequences it has on the experiences of run-commuting. The addition of a bag to the body-object configurations of run-commuters can cause disruption to normal eurhythmia as the polyrhythmic ensemble of the runner adjusts to a new stimulus. Bags are mutable however and have their own rhythms, which can be cacophonous to wider running rhythms, impressing themselves negatively onto runners' bodies and movements. There is, however, generally a process of becoming accustomed to running with a bag. Here, bodily capacities to cope with the intensified embodiments of running with a bag develop through habit and a form of isorhythmia is visible, as more tolerable, albeit different, rhythmic ensembles develop around run-commuting with a bag.

However, most run-commuters also spoke of amendments to the mobile prostheses and wider assemblage in order to speed up this process of becoming accustomed and minimising the disruptive affects of bags on their experiences. Once more, Bissell (2009) offers an instructive way to think about this. Drawing on de Certeau and Ingold, Bissell (2009: p.176) puts forward the idea of tactics to consider the "practical knowledge that, through repetition, develop into skills and techniques for moving". As such, these act as a form of feedback loop in the polyrhythmic ensemble of run-commuting, where practitioners alter their body-object configurations to produce more harmonious rhythms. There were three main tactics run-commuters in this project employed to enhance the embodied experiences of running with a bag.

The first tactic is to dampen the impacts of running on the bag by running more slowly. The rhythms of slower running are more gentle waves than the staccato-like rhythms involved in running quickly. With milder forces being imparted on to the bag on the runner's back, the rhythms with which it moves are less abrasive, bouncy and jangly, leading to a more tolerable experience:

> **Sam:** I'm not conscious of it as like every single step of the way, but I'm certainly aware I'm wearing it. But I don't feel like it's slowing me down … But yeah, it's not a big thing and that's partly why most of those runs are not like fast runs when I've got a bag on. I definitely wouldn't take a bag on a training run if I don't have to.

This tactic may be more an accidental technique, taking its impetus more from running desires on the run-commute rather than purely being a tactic of bag management, but is impact is still noticeable. Altering the intensity of the rhythms at play in run-commuting can minimise the disruptive rhythms of bag-use.

The second tactic is one of design. A burgeoning research field has begun to demonstrate the importance of design on the taking place and experience of mobilities as well as mobilities thinking (Jensen, 2014; 2016; Jensen and Lanng, 2016; Jensen et al, 2016; Spinney et al, 2017). For run-commuters, the design of the bag can be crucial in developing eurhythmia and mediating relationships between body and prostheses. As hinted in earlier quotes, many run-commuters have used multiple different bags for run-commuting, in the hope of producing better

experiences through design. A bag designed specifically for running, or even run-commuting, seemed crucial to producing better embodied experiences for most run-commuters. When asked what affordances they offered compared to other bags, participants in this project revealed a range of design elements they appreciated:

> **Dominic:** It's to keep the bag locked down. It's to keep me feeling comfortable whilst locking the bag down … Lightweight. As light as possible. Minimalist … Ventilated … Reflectivity as well. And really just the design of it. It locks down without being uncomfortable, but it provided a secure fit.
>
> **Sam:** It's really kind of held very close to the body and it's got 3 straps. So it really forms part of you— It's almost like an extra layer of clothing, in a way.

As well as other useful features related to the storage capacities and safety a bag can offer the run-commuters, there are various design elements visible here aimed at minimising the disruptive nature of bag-use rhythms. Straps are perhaps the most significant feature. A combination of shoulder straps, waist straps and chest straps (seen in Figure 10.3) 'lock down' bags very close to runners' bodies. In doing so, the cacophonous rhythms of bags and bodies colliding into one another are nullified

Figure 10.3 The use of shoulder, waist and chest straps to 'lock down' a bag

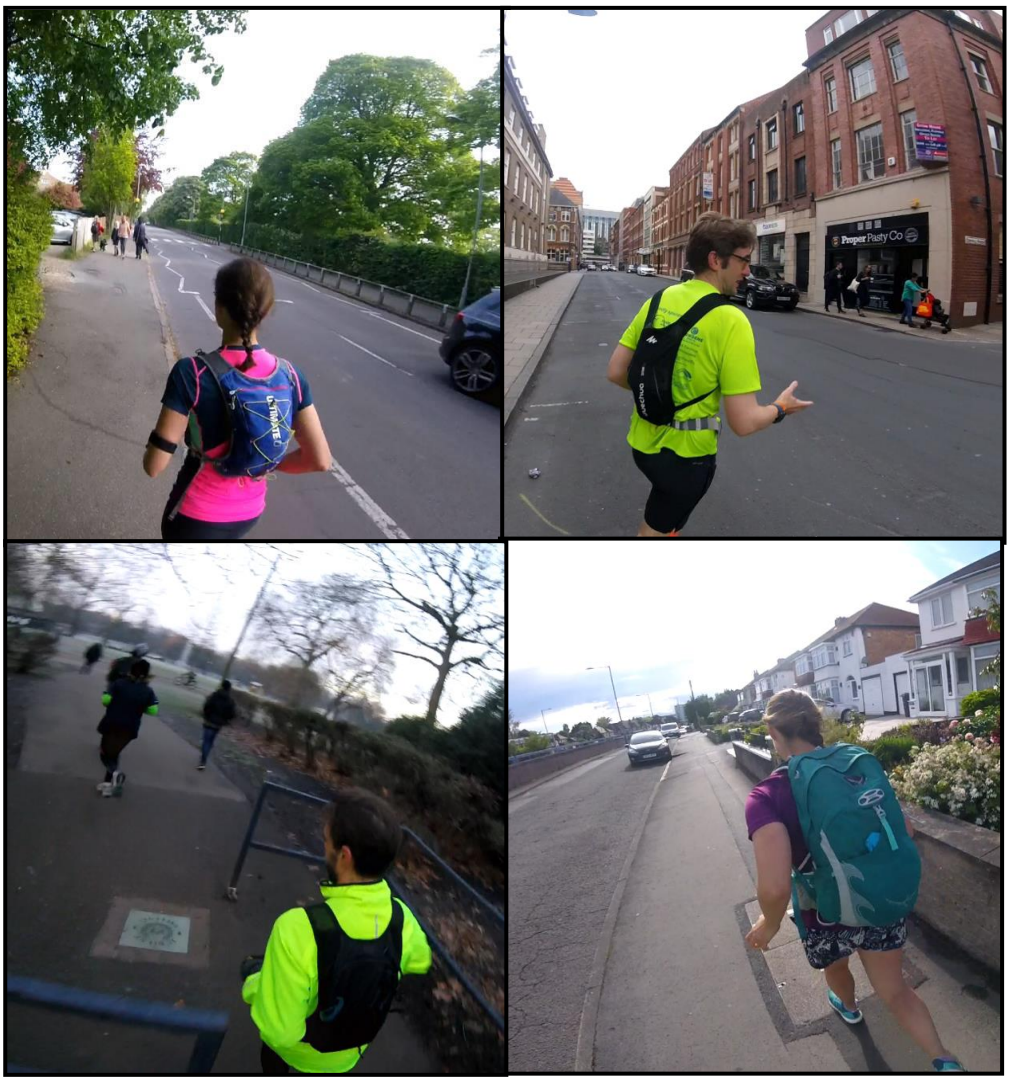
as the running-assemblage moves as one rhythmic entity. Bodies and prostheses are no longer competing and the bag begins to form part of run-commuters, as Sam explained. The importance of bag straps on the experience of run-commuting cannot be understated. Straps effectively force the runner's rhythms onto the bag, rather than having its own, and with a body-object assemblage that moves together, friction, irritation and heat are simultaneously reduced. A reduced size, weight and the design of ventilation features also helped in this endeavour. Together, the design features of specific running bags helped to smooth the disruptive rhythms experienced during bag-use and in doing so, help alleviate some of the negative affectivity of bags. The precise design desired varies between run-commuters and a range of those used by participants in this project can be seen in Figure 10.4. The specific design needs of the running body-object assemblage has led to the development of new products pitched directly at run-commuters. This relates to the increasing commercialisation of the practice (as seen in Chapter 4) and the signification of bags within that. This was lamented by a few participants in this project:

> **Callum:** Running is meant to be kind of a low-cost activity so I don't like the commercialisation of it - the companies that are charging £200 for a running bag.

The tactic of design, thus, is an important one in practitioners managing to run happily with bags but is onethat can present financial barriers to employing.

The final key tactic employed by run-commuters to encourage eurhythmia involves developing the skills of packing to help alleviate the cacophonous rhythms of bodies and bags. In many ways, packing is a competence of run-commuting practices, one tied to both the rhythmic experience and logistics of run-commuting. This is something I demonstrate in the following discussion, which takes a closer look at the microgeography of bags and their rhythmic affectivity. So far, I have discussed the bag as a single object. This is not truly accurate as a bag is itself a container for a variety of other objects. Just as bags have rhythms forced upon them when attached to a running body, the contents of bags are forced to move as well. They can bounce and rattle around in accordance or discordance with the rhythms of running, impressing back on one another as they vibrate, crease, bend, collide and mush together with often undesirable outcomes.

Figure 10.4 A range of run-commuting bags used by participants



The mutability of mobile objects seen here can affect running bodies too as the arrhythmia of moving objects hit, irritate, poke, weigh-down and aggravate runners' bodies. The role of packing was important to run-commuters in curtailing this and many participants discussed the development of this competency:

> **Oliver:** I think I've learned how to pack it so you just don't have things jagging in your back.
>
> **Malcolm:** It's packed pretty well, generally. Occasionally I've had slightly crumpled shirts, more crumbled than I perhaps like but not too bad … I've got better at [packing] … I think it's kind of rolling it into a kind of cylinder, almost. Fold and then roll it. That's the way I do the shirts.

Again here, we see attempts to make the multiple objects in a bag move with only one harmonious rhythm, all in accordance with each other. There are also techniques that change the form of these objects so they are less affected by the vibrations and pulsations of run-commuting, such as rolling shirts to reduce unwanted creasing. This development of packing skills helps to improve the embodied experiences of running with a bag by harmonising the arrhythmia of objects within the bag, diminishing the negative impacts back on bodies they are moving with and the objects themselves. These were skills reported by all asked in the project, often accompanied with a narrative of refinement and fine-tuning. As such, packing is a key competence for many in their run-commuting practices and further helps to demarcate run-commuting as distinct from other practices of running. Packing skills are not usual elements of running practices and once more speaks to run-commuting's complexing with the practices of home and work that are not so entangled in wider running practices.

Running with a bag is a defining aspect of run-commuting practices, a defining dimension of the experiences had on the run, and different to wider running experiences. Through the lenses of affective materialities and rhythms, this section has demonstrated the impact running with the mobile prosthetic of a bag has on run-commuting experiences. Generally, it was not an overly pleasurable experience for run-commuters. Some reported severe dislike of running with a bag but most described a tolerance for it, accepting it for the facilitation it offers their practice. The addition of bags to runners' bodies affected experiences by not only intensifying embodiment with new quantities and qualities of stimuli, but also contributing new rhythms to the polyrhythmic ensembles of runners. These rhythms were often disruptive and constricting, altering the ordinary eurhythmia of bodily movements, breaths, heart rates, and form. They were also disruptive through the rhythm of the bag itself, banging, jangling and moving in discordance with the body it is anchored too. The weight, friction, temperature and abrasions caused by the competing rhythms of bags and bodies often imprinted themselves onto runners' bodies, negatively affecting experiences. However, most run-commuters discussed a process of becoming accustomed to running with a bag. Through experience and habit, runners' bodies develop capacities to deal with the cacophonous stimuli of running with a bag, something aided by the simultaneous development of competences and tactics to manage moving with this mobile prosthetic. Together, bodily capacities, design considerations, packing skills and running slowly led to rhythmic retunings, altering run-commuting experiences to the point where running

with a bag was mostly tolerable. This could be seen as isorhythmia, where eurhythmia is reached when running with a bag, it just may be a slightly different eurhythmia to running ordinarily. Running with a bag extends run-commuters bodily capacities for load bearing but at the same time can curtail the pleasures and movements of running. Running with a bag is both a facilitation and an encumbrance that mediates and transforms the embodied experiences of run-commuting in a multitude of ways that come to light with a receptivity to rhythm. Grasping run-commuting experiences in this way are not only vital for understanding the embodied experience of run-commuting, and subsequently the production of run-commuting, but it contributes to research concerning affective materiality in mobile practices and to fleshy rhythmanalysis that takes seriously the internal, biological, somatic and corporeal rhythms of bodies on the move.

Conclusion

This chapter has attempted to bring to life the experiences of run-commuting. By paying attention to the elements that help demarcate run-commuting from wider commuting and running, this chapter has demonstrated not only the significance of experience to run-commuters but also some of the key aspects of enacting and performing run-commuting. Firstly, it was noted that run-commuting entailed running particular routes more regularly than ordinary running routes which bestowed run-commuters an intimate and detailed knowledge of the places they ran through. Running reoriented their relationships with place and this mobile sense of place was widely enjoyed by run-commuters. Another aspect of run-commuting that run-commuters also found pleasure in was the somatic senses of running. At odds with other commuting practices, which generally seeks to minimise effort, run-commuters often took great pleasure in the sense of movement and being in motion. While not always methodologically easy to get at, these pleasures are significant in run-commuting practices, helping to motivate and sustain the practice, as well as being integral in producing it.

Encumbrance was explored next, as the second attribute of run-commuting that distinguished it from wider running. In particular, this chapter concentrated on the embodied experiences of running with a bag. A bag is a defining aspect of run-commuting, helping to facilitate the practice through cargo-capacities but also having

a significant impact on the experience of running. Through the lenses of affective materialities and rhythm, this chapter analysed the impact bags have on running experiences. They were shown to have neutral to negative impacts on run-commuters, with many reporting the disruption they bring to their natural running rhythms, the disruptive rhythms the bag has itself, and the ways bodies and bags impress on one another. Generally, however, run-commuters become accustomed to running with this mobile prosthetic through the development of habits, bodily capacities and other techniques – design, packing and running slowly - to help harmonise the rhythms of bags and bodies. Most run-commuters reported a form of isorhythic eurhythmia, where their experience of running with a bag was no longer unpleasant, it was just different to ordinary running and largely tolerable for the facilitation it offers their run-commuting practices.

This chapter has also sought to conceptualise run-commuting experiences as a form of intense embodiment to express the heightened animation, enrolling of the body and the sparking of various affective registers when running. The three cuts of intensity offered by Bissell et al (2017) have proved instructive for exploring how such intensity impacted on the experiences of run-commuting. Intensity as a method of understanding qualitative difference aided the identification of somatic pleasures and running with a bag as different to ordinary commuting and running respectively. Intensity as the qualities of stimulation and the development of skills to cope with this helped understand some of the issues had with go-along interviews and the initial difficulties run-commuters had with running with a bag. And intensity as transformative proved effective in grasping the changing relationships between run-commuters and places, and run-commuters and bags through motion, repetition and experience. The intensity of run-commuting embodiments are crucial elements of the practice but also crucial to understand as they demonstrate why some people start and sustain run-commuting while others think it unfathomable, the pleasures gained from run-commuting and the challenges that exist to those pleasures.

Part Four:

Conclusions

Chapter 11

Conclusions

This thesis has provided the first comprehensive account of run-commuting in the UK. The disparity between the rising popularity of run-commuting and what was actually known about it provided the impetus for this project and the study sought to answer the questions of why has run-commuting emerged, how does it take place, and what potential does it demonstrate? Given the lack of pre-existing knowledge about run-commuting, this research set out to understand the practice of as comprehensively as possible. This entailed attending to run-commuting with both a breadth and depth of study capable of grasping a range of perspectives in an encompassing manner. In order to do this, conceptually I drew on mobility and transport studies for the value their approaches to movement offer and, in particular, took inspiration from the intellectual resources in these fields that sought to approach mobile practices in a holistic manner. In this regard, this project was influenced by a series of frameworks that sought to thoroughly comprehend mobile practices and make their complexities researchable. Specifically, Tim Cresswell's 'Production of Mobilities' (2006; 2010), Ole Jensen's 'Staging Mobilities' (2013), and Elizabeth Shove, Mika Pantzar and Matt Watson's 'Dynamics of Social Practice' (2012) provided conceptual inspiration to my approach in this thesis. Out of the synergies of these frameworks, I proposed nine conceptual tropes that have guided this research into run-commuting: interdisciplinarity, mobilities as produced, relational and processual approaches, changing mobilities, politics of mobility, everyday mobilities, materiality, meaning and embodiment.

Working across various registers in this manner and responding to the changing nature of run-commuting led to the adoption of a methodological bricolage in this study (Rogers, 2012). Bricolage foregrounds multiple perspectives and methodological eclecticism in comprehending phenomena. Three methods of this bricolage in particular informed the presentation of this thesis and, as such, the findings explored over the last seven chapters have primarily emerged from data generated by survey, interview and go-along methods. These had been effective at apprehending run-commuters' practices and perspectives in a comprehensive manner, providing both a breadth and depth of understanding that goes a long way to rectifying the void of knowledge about run-commuting and its omission from

sustained study. In this conclusion, I will briefly summarise the key findings emerging from the research, followed by a discussion of the key contributions of the study, its limitations, and future research avenues catalysed by this research.

Summary of findings

The scope and depth of this project produced a mass of new knowledge about run-commuting, as to be expected when starting from a relatively blank canvas. This thesis represents what is known about run-commuting in the UK, and therefore contain numerous key findings. I will draw these together under the guiding themes of emergence, production and potential.

The emergence of run-commuting

The changing nature of run-commuting in the UK not only inspired this project but also became a prominent aspect of the findings. Over the course of this thesis, I have demonstrated through a range of proxies and estimations (in lieu of specific data) the rapidly increasing numbers of run-commuters in the UK, a rise that has been paralleled by a range of other materials, happenings and initiatives around run-commuting. In particular, there is an increasing prominence of run-commuting within media and social media discourses, as well as a commercialisation and institutionalisation of run-commuting that are beginning to provide communities, resources and facilitation around run-commuting.

The emergence of run-commuting has not been an equal affair however. An uneven portrait of run-commuting has been painted in this thesis with key differences being noted in where run-commuting is emerging and who is fuelling it. Run-commuting is most clearly visible in larger urban areas with a prominent base of professional and higher skilled jobs. London is emblematic of this and over half of all participants in this study live or work there. Run-commuters themselves most commonly worked in professional industries with a notable presence of education and finance industries in particular. This is indicative of the demographics of run-commuting, where practitioners are overwhelmingly white, highly-educated and highly-paid. Beyond this however, there is an interesting age and gender divide within run-

commuting populations. While overall more run-commuters are male, female run-commuters are actually in the majority of the newer recruits and so are more significant in driving the continuing emergence of run-commuting. Furthermore, male run-commuters also tend to be older and more likely to have children. Female run-commuters, however, tend to be younger and childless, suggesting that some of the gendered differences in run-commuting practices centre around the feasibility of run-commuting with children. As such, the demographics of run-commuting are not just a matter of who does run-commute, but who can run-commute. This speaks more widely to the politics of the practice and its enablement or constraint.

Why people start to run-commute is also a key element in its emergence. Multiple motivations for run-commuting were discussed in this project and while many concerned motivations for running more widely, perhaps the most significant motivation was time. Time motivations are the key in understanding why run-commuting has emerged as a practice specifically; why running is occurring on the commute. All participants in this project reported increasing time squeezes that made it difficult to fit running into their everyday lives or a dissatisfaction with how it is currently integrated. As such, run-commuting becomes a time-management solution that enables a smoother and more satisfactory integration of running into the rhythms of daily life. This also hints towards the wide variety of other practices run-commuting is bundled with and most notable are the practices of running, commuting, work and home. It is the increasing squeezes on how these practices sequence that often catalysed run-commuting. The most prominent catalyst was an increase in running requirements (in terms of frequency, distance and durations) that commonly accompany race entry and training rhythms. So while widely entangled and bundled, running practices had the most significant impact on run-commuting. However, increasing time demands were not always needed to catalyse run-commuting and here just an awareness of the practice was a notable spark incentivising its uptake. This speaks to the emergent nature of run-commuting and despite witnessing more widespread attention and patronage over recent years, it is still a relatively niche mode of mobility and one not universally recognised.

The second key question of this project concerned how run-commuting is produced and takes place. The thingness of run-commuting has been a tension throughout this thesis, but I have argued that run-commuting is an identifiable practice in its own right. It is undeniably heavily entangled with running practices but there are key differences that I contend demark run-commuting and its distinctive elements. Applying the frameworks this project drew on to run-commuting helps to reveal this distinctiveness. As I summarise Table 11.1, run-commuting exhibits changes to running practices in every element of each framework. As such, I suggest this produces run-commuting as a distinct but highly entangled practice. Due to these unique elements and their recognisability, I argue that run-commuting exists as a practice-as-entity under Shove et al's (2012) conceptualisation. Through moments of doing, these elements are being re-integrated, helping to produce and reproduce the practice as a practice-as-performance. Within run-commuting there is a recursive relationship between practice-as-entity and practice-as-performance that is currently being fulfilled by practitioners and thus helping to sustain the practice.

This thesis also identified spaces of practice as crucial to the production and sustaining of run-commuting. These function as sites of enactment where the practice takes place and its elements are brought together. More than this though, through a focus on the spaces of run-commuting, a sense of the complexity of run-commuting and its entanglement with other practices, humans and non-humans became visible. Atmospheres, showers, bags, canals, light, flexi-time, planning, habits, storage, parenting, training plans, and experiences were some of the varied aspects bound up in run-commuting practices. In their presence, absence or sequencing, these aspects also functioned as key enabling or constraining factors.

Four spaces were explored in this thesis - home, waypoints, work and running spaces – each crucial to the production of run-commuting. The exploration of home spaces focussed predominantly on its function as a node in the practices of everyday life that provides the incongruities that motivate run-commuting. Principal here was the maintenance or improvement of parenting and relationship practices that often suffer from the time demands of running. Furthermore, home spaces acted as the chief site of run-commuting logistics where the practice is planned, prepared and organised, as well as the space where there experiential benefits of run-commuting

Table 11.1 Run-commuting's distinctiveness as a practice identified through the lenses of mobility frameworks

Framework	Element	Run-commuting's distinctiveness as reported in this thesis
Production of Mobilities	Movement	• Routes are generally linear and more routine than ordinary running. • Occurs in different time-spaces to ordinary running. • May involve waypoints.
	Meaning	• Additional meanings of transport and time-management.
	Experience	• Routineness of routes develops pronounced mobile sense of place and results in a geographical pleasure. • Running with a bag is a distinctive embodied experience. • Experiences at point A and point B increase in significance.
Staging Mobilities	Physical setting, material spaces and design	• Running with a bag is a distinctive material relationship. • Hard and soft infrastructures are work are integral to enabling run-commuting. • Design of waypoints are important for some run-commuters' routes.
	Embodied performance	• Running with a bag is a distinctive embodied experience. • Embodying the meanings of transport and time-management too.
	Social interactions	• Increased intensity of mobile encounters is important in route choices, often seeking flow. • Social interactions at work crucial in enabling run-commuting through producing acceptability. • Improving social interactions at home through time-management and better sequencing of practices.

Dynamics of Social Practice	Materials	• Running with a bag is a distinctive material relationship. • Encumbered with materials not just related to running but also work and home.
	Competencies	• Embodied competencies of running with a bag. • Logistical competencies in managing and organising run-commuting. • Packing competencies to reduce ill-effects of running with a bag. • Routing competencies to stage rush-hour friendly run-commutes.
	Meanings	• Additional meanings of transport and time-management

are most acutely felt. Although less prominent in run-commuting practices, waypoints are crucial spaces of experience and logistics for those who encounter them, such as train stations and carriages. There, run-commuters are confronted by their multi-modality and their out-of-placeness as they negotiate physical and social spaces not designed for them, and manage the bodily effects of running. Work spaces drew attention to the range of hard and soft infrastructures that help to facilitate or constrain run-commuting. The soft infrastructures that proved particularly facilitating here were casual dress codes, flexible working hours, and active workplace cultures that help generate atmospheres of acceptability. On the hard infrastructure side, showers and storage facilities were highlighted as particularly key for managing the logistics and bodily effects of run-commuting but creative solutions and the appropriation of other facilities also regularly occurred should these be lacking. Tied into these considerations were wider cultures surrounding hygiene, sweat and clothing in workplaces, which revealed a further gendering that restricted some female run-commuters' practices.

The mobile spaces of running were the last sites of enactment explored in this thesis. They are the key site of experience where many of the benefits of run-commuting are attained and the principle motivations fulfilled. Run-commuters sought to stage their experiences from above through route choice. Here practitioners recognised the difficulties posed by rush-hour running but also demonstrated an acute geographical sensitivity where routes could be crafted to reduce these negative aspects. In particular, a preference of running in green and blue spaces became clear due to the aesthetics value, lower pollution levels and interruption-free running they offer. However, this was not a constant preference as changing weather and light conditions throughout the year can make these undesirable due to the perceived danger associated with darkness. The staging from below explored in this thesis focused on the embodied and geographical pleasures derived from running, and the affectivity of running with a bag. Here both materiality and rhythm became central to grasping this significant run-commuting experience, and although something disruptive to begin with, most run-commuters discussed an acclimatisation period where their bodily rhythms realigned to accommodate the bag and produced tolerable experiences. Running with a bag also gave rise a few tactics to help manage it, most notably the skills of packing which are arguably a key competence of run-commuting practices.

This brisk summary of the production of run-commuting explored in this thesis highlights the complexity and expansiveness of it but does not do it justice. In comparison to ordinary running practices, run-commuting is more intensely bundled with a plethora of other practices and rhythms of life, embroils a wider-range of spaces and materials, and is reliant on a wider-range of facilitations in order to establish and sustain it.

The potential of run-commuting

The potential of run-commuting was the last big question driving this thesis. Here, potential could be considered in two ways. Firstly, the potential of the practice to sustain and continue and secondly, the potential of the practice for practitioners and societies. However, with the principal focus on current run-commuters in this thesis, these were explored less thoroughly and are certainly worthy of further research. The potential of the practice to sustain is important to question, as research reveals that promising niche practices can often fail to sustain their popularity after a period of virality (see Geels, 2012; Schwanen, 2013). The attributes of run-commuting, and run-commuters in particular, indicate that the potential population for run-commuting is restricted. Unless further changes occur within the practice or wider ecosystem enabling/constraining it, run-commuting will be restricted mostly to time poor but serious runners for whom the geographic, domestic and work-related structures fall to facilitate run-commuting. Thus, the potential population of run-commuters will likely continue to draw from a relatively small, but not inconsiderable, group of people. A high turnover of practitioners was also revealed in this project, suggesting that individuals' may struggle to sustain their practices. This stems from the complex logistics involved in run-commuting but also the motivations for it. The significance of temporal motivations in run-commuting entails that it is often an issue-driven practice. Arguably, once these issues have subsided then the need and desire to run-commute may wane and this is a significant question mark about potential sustainability of run-commuting practices.

However, this research has also demonstrated various potentials that hint towards greater sustainability. Firstly, many run-commuters have found value in run-commuting beyond the initial time-efficiency that motivated their practice, where experiential aspects become important to maintaining practices. The various

enablements highlighted in the thesis could also be considered as potentials. The different hard and soft infrastructures discussed offer up potentials for shaping the practice, for enabling run-commuting to not only be established but sustained too. Run-commuting habits could also be considered in this light (Bissell, 2015), with the various competencies around logistics and packing that run-commuters have developed also helping to sustain the practice and increase its potential.

Persisting run-commuting practices do have much potential for society too. For individual practitioners, run-commuting has the potential to be an effective time-management technique capable of successfully sequencing healthy and active practices into daily life without detriment to other practices. It has potential as a good transport mode too, offering an autonomous, flexible and reliable mode of commuting that many found a valuable aspect of their practice. For wider society, however, these benefits do not necessarily translate into wider potential. The health, time-efficiencies and knock-on productivity benefits of run-commuting certainly do have advantages, however achieving this on a larger scale may be more difficult. Growing the practice to realise its potential may require further facilitation and that is where its potential appears more limited. As discussed by Aldred (2015), encouraging such facilitation often requires a rationalisation and foregrounding of utility. With run-commuting, that is a little tricky as its falls between the purview of sport, public health and transport organisations who may put measures in place to facilitate it. Even once over this barrier, it is not the easiest practice to rationalise and sell. To begin with, the population and potential population of run-commuting is small. For sport and public health organisations, run-commuting often enables those already very active to be more active, rather than encouraging those who do little activity to do some, which is where their priorities lie. For transport organisations, run-commuting potentially has value as a low carbon mobility that would help ease burdens on transport networks. However, as many run-commuters are also cycle-commuters or public transport passengers, some of these benefits are reduced. As such, run-commuting's broader potential seems somewhat limited and any further facilitation or potential-releasing is most likely going to come from innovations by practitioners, workplaces or commercial organisations, who seem to profit most from the benefits of run-commuting and its persistence as a mobile practice.

Contributions of the research

This project into the emergence, production and potential of run-commuting has made multiple contributions to the literature and practices surrounding mobile practices. Empirically, this study has provided the first comprehensive account of run-commuting, a mobile practice which is growing in popularity and prominence. As such, this thesis is the *de facto* authority on run-commuting and represents what is known about the practice. From this study, we have learnt what run-commuting is, the changing nature of it, who run-commuters are, where run-commuting takes place, what run-commuting journeys look like, what motivates and catalyses run-commuting, what enables and constrains it, as well as how it happens and is experienced in different spaces. Beyond this, however, this study has also empirically contributed to research concerned with how new mobile practices take place (Murray and Doughty, 2016), with understanding active travel (Pooley et al, 2013), with exploring the multi-modal nature of mobilities and the bundling of transport practices (Cass and Faulconbridge, 2016), with how health, sport and physical activity actually happen (Andrews, 2018; Barnfield, 2020), and with how everyday life is managed in contemporary society (Pink, 2012). As a practice caught between running and commuting, and motivated by the harmonising of everyday practices, run-commuting can make empirical contributions to a wide range of agendas.

This study has made various conceptual contributions too. At a broader scale, this work has contributed to endeavours to bring the perspectives of transport geography and mobilities research together more fruitfully in comprehending mobile practices (Shaw and Hesse, 2010). To these ends, this study has successfully taken inspiration from frameworks of mobility that seek to understand mobile practices comprehensively (Cresswell, 2006; Shove et al, 2012; Jensen, 2013). Such frameworks offer ways of attending to the complex and multi-perspectival nature of mobile practices while simultaneously making them researchable. These have been valuable influences in this project and effective in bridging different disciplinary positions, including mobilities' interest in the meanings, experiences, contexts and relationality of movement, and transport geography's attention to the spatialities, implications, facilitation and rationales of movement. These frameworks have also been instrumental in developing a comprehensive approach to studying emerging practices in an encompassing manner, working across the mobilities and moorings

dialectic, resulting in an approach equally sensitive to the importance of fixities and immobilities, as it is animation and dynamism (Bissell, 2007; Shaw and Hesse, 2010). This was also aided by the bricolage methodology of this research. Surveys, interviews and go-alongs were all used fruitfully in this thesis, demonstrating the value of conventional research methods alongside mobile methods in understanding mobile practices (Merriman, 2014). As such, frameworks and bricolage offer useful resources for others seeking to understand mobile practices in more holistic fashions.

Stepping down a conceptual scale, this research has also contributed to the development of various concepts used to help make sense of run-commuting in this project. Firstly, run-commuting has challenged and pushed the academic conceptualisation of running to include manifestations of it as transport alongside those of sport, health and experience (Tanio, 2012). As an active travel mode, run-commuting has also extended understandings of active commuting, bringing into conversation a mode beyond the hegemony of walking and cycling (Pooley et al, 2013). Likewise, the incorporation of running within discourses of transport has challenged conceptualisations of productivity within travel (Lyons and Urry, 2005). It has asked them to incorporate the health benefits, training benefits, and time-management benefits of run-commuting within their conceptualisations, alongside activities, such as working or experiencing time-out (Jain and Lyons, 2008). In run-commuting, productivity is also often realised on a timespan longer than a single journey or day, which is a more usual durational assessment of mobility's productivity (Lyons and Urry, 2005).

Two further conceptual contributions relate to my use of rhythm and logistics in this project. Regarding rhythms, this study has contributed to bringing attention to internal, bodily, biological and somatic rhythms within rhythmanalysis (Larsen, 2019), which have generally been overlooked in favour of understanding place rhythms and how bodies entangle with these (Mels, 2004). In this project, the somatic and corporeal rhythms of run-commuters have proved integral to grasping the embodied experiences of the practice. Lastly, my use of logistics as an everyday practice of managing, organising and accomplishing mobile practices offers a different focus to other work on logistics (such as Cowen, 2014). This is a more individual sense than a systemic one, and invites attention to habits, routines and enablement of practices that are valuable in understanding how mobilities are accomplished and how individuals establish new mobility practices. Some of these

conceptual contributions emanate from the nature of run-commuting itself and the challenges it poses to traditional understandings of exercise and transport practices. Others, however, has been developed as a result of the approach to run-commuting employed in this project, that sought to apprehend run-commuting with both a breadth of scope and depth of understanding.

The findings of this study also reveal some possible contributions for policy and practice. These are little muddier however. As discussed earlier in the chapter, run-commuting may struggle to meet the transport, sport or public health priorities to warrant specific facilitation. Furthermore, as many run-commuters also commute actively or through low carbon means, any measures to encourage run-commuting may just result in people swapping active/low-carbon modes rather than recruiting new active/low-carbon commuters. Moreover, run-commuting is already being facilitated for some as a by-product of measures to encourage other active forms of commuting. Therefore, attempts to facilitate run-commuting may be less successful at meeting priorities than they may appear and facilitation is already occurring for many without specific attempts.

This being said, run-commuting does have much potential as a means of successfully integrating active practices into everyday life, as a low carbon and active form of commuting that can ease burdens on transport networks, and in facilitating the health benefits of running to be harvested. To these ends, a few priorities did emerge from the research that point towards ways of facilitating the practice and encouraging participation. Much of this centres on end of trip facilities. Workplaces in particular are important sites for enabling or constraining run-commuting through the hard and soft infrastructures they offer. Hard infrastructure requirements here are relatively light however. Showers and storage facilities in enough quantity and quality are the most valuable facilities in encouraging run-commuting by enabling logistics routines to be developed and the bodily effects of running to be managed. However, further facilities would also be welcomed, including drying, hair-drying and suitable changing facilities, easing the transitions between running and working. On the soft infrastructure side, flexible working hours and casual dress codes prove effective in facilitating run-commuting practices by easing time pressures and logistics.

Beyond workplaces, however, the most impactful measure to help encourage run-commuting would be awareness raising campaigns. An awareness of run-commuting was one of the biggest catalysts reported in this project and demonstrates that

there may be a latent population who would benefit from run-commuting but are unaware it is a possibility. As such, measures to raise the profile of run-commuting, to increase the discourses around it and to normalise it could be very effective at further realising its potential. Running clubs, social media and media posts were highlighted as valuable in disseminating the cognizance of run-commuting so could be utilised successfully here to help raise its profile. This will likely spark considerations of the logistics and feasibility of run-commuting, so developing resources around how common issues can be overcome would be beneficial. Here, distance is one of the biggest barriers for potential run-commuters, so highlighting the possibilities of run-commuting in multi-modal journeys could also be effective. To these ends, improving the range and accessibility of toilet, changing, water and storage facilities at transport intersections would also prove enabling to run-commuting practices. Another key consideration for potential run-commuters are the routes of run-commuting. Develop mapping resources, both online and within the built environment that highlight good running routes through cities (aiming for flow, aesthetic value and low pollution) may prove useful. Likewise, improving the lighting of green and blue space routes could encourage year-round run-commuting and minimise winter drop-offs.

Some bigger, blue-sky ideas for encouraging run-commuting also surfaced from this research, though understandably their feasibility is questionable. To help overcome the barriers presented by needing to run encumbered, bag escort services could be developed that do the heavy lifting for run-commuters, so to speak, resulting in easier logistics and more pleasurable running experiences. Secondly, running lanes in the streetscape to reduce the disruptions, interruptions and encounters had on the run would improve run-commuting experiences and encourage participation. And lastly, sweaty or active carriages on trains could help negate some of the more awkward social encounters that can occur in multi-modal journeys. These were some of the main facilitation measures emerging from this research that could be adopted in policy and practice. However, a wider range and higher priority of necessary measures could be gained from the perspectives of potential and former run-commuters, which were not analysed in this project.

The final key contribution of this thesis I want to highlight concerns the ethics and positionalities of researching emerging practices. Pervading my research into run-commuting practices has been a sensitivity to any impact I may be having on run-commuting by researching it. I am aware that providing the first comprehensive

account of run-commuting from the perceived authority of academia may bestow my efforts and perspectives with a certain gravitas which entail they have a life beyond the partialness and subjectivity they were generated through. It may be impossible to know what precise impact, if any, I have had on run-commuting. However, moments and matters have surfaced throughout this thesis where such impact has been questioned.

In particular, this research may have impacted the thingness of the run-commuting. Throughout this thesis, I have argued for the analytical consideration of run-commuting as a thing and a distinct practice. However, it also became clear that some practitioners would not agree with this, seeing run-commuting as just running and being uneasy with the compounding of commuting within the practice. While I would argue against this, it is possible that the thingness of run-commuting is a construct of my analysis (Melucci, 1996). However, the effects of this may be self-fulfilling and self-validating. By naming run-commuting, by defining it, by setting out its boundaries, by proposing its main elements as I have done in this thesis, have I hailed it into being? Has a form of interpellation occurred (Althusser, 1971; Law, 2000)? Have I made recognisable, speakable and resourced the elements of practice, and thus analytically produced a practice-as-entity, which practitioner's performances can now reproduce? I hope my approach to this research has been sensitive to these concerns, honoured the various perspectives on the practice, and foregrounded others' voices. These maybe inevitable risks of researching emerging and previously unreported practices however. Evoking the metaphor of the research field, Letherby (2003: p.6) eloquently remarks that "when we enter a field we make footprints on the land and are likely to disturb the environment. When we leave we may have mud on our shoes, pollen on our clothes". As such, a sensitive and reflexive research practice is required to understand and grasp these impacts, particular when researching emerging, niche or lesser-known practices for what insights these innovations may have for living more sustainably or healthily.

Wider implications of the research

Beyond the more specific contributions emerging from this research discussed above, the insights developed throughout the thesis have some wider implications

for mobilities and geography. In particular, this work helps advance thinking on the politics of mobility, on the city, and the discipline of geography.

A keen attunement to the politics of mobility bound up within run-commuting has been maintained throughout the thesis. This politics is evident in the diverse enablement and constraint of run-commuting as well as the varied social differentiations it is produced by and productive of. The uniqueness, or perhaps peculiarity, of run-commuting as a mobile practice and the comprehensive approach employed to its study in the thesis has highlighted the power-geometries (Massey, 1993), social injustices (Lucas, 2004) and other elements more commonly associated with the politics of mobility (Cresswell, 2010). However, it has also advanced some of this thinking on the politics of mobility and demonstrated other ways in which politics can materialise and be considered in mobile practices.

Firstly, run-commuting challenges the positives associated with the notion of enablement. Here, it is often a deficiency or a negative that can serve as a prime motivator and enabler for run-commuting. Run-commuting is issue-driven, a pragmatic solution for a deficiency of time or issues in spatio-temporally sequencing everyday life. Thus, run-commuting is rarely a first-choice mode of mobility and is commonly enabled through a lack of time. Further negative enablement is visible in the pleasure and motivation that practitioners can derive from the pain of run-commuting. This challenges what may be understood by motivations or facilitators for mobility. For a societally beneficial practice, these may be difficult attributes to resolve if seeking to further encourage the practice in just and positive ways.

Beyond the primary facilitation of adverse motivations, other enablers and constraints presented in this project offer developments to political thinking in mobilities. Many of these concern the publicness of the practice and the wide sphere of influence upon it. In run-commuting, the politics of mobility extends beyond the moment of mobility itself, and even beyond the moments of access and egress. Enablements, constraints and sources of social differentiation in run-commuting practices are distributed widely and mutably, akin to Sheller's (2018) exploration of mobility justice across different relations and scales. The spaces of work and home, in particular, are key sites where the politics of run-commuting manifest. They demonstrate how the (im)materiality and the sociality of these spaces enable and constrain run-commuting. There is much at stake in these spaces - responsibilities need performing and relationships need maintaining successfully. Being a sweating body with particular needs and affects in the pursuit of often individual goals can be

disruptive and challenging in these spaces. These politics are changeable too, as social relations shift and life circumstances change, the politics of run-commuting can be constantly negotiated, as the feasibility of run-commuting is (re)considered recurrently on individual and household bases. Together, these demonstrate the wide and complex nature of politics bound up in emerging modes of mobility, such as run-commuting, and their nested practices (Cass and Faulconbridge, 2016). They extend beyond just access to mobility and more widely revolve around the politics of how mobility fits with everyday life and the changing nature of this.

The exploration of run-commuting offered in this thesis also progresses thinking around cities and contemporary living in cities. Run-commuting opens up cities, city living and its movements cultures to more playfulness, possibility and change than the representations of time-squeezed urban living and grinding monotonous commutes suggest. There is opportunity to reconsider the spatio-temporal structuring of city life to enable greater harmony among everyday demands. There is room for alternative mobile practices to be incorporated into the changing time-spaces of cities. Doing so may challenge how cities are navigated, experienced and understood. Options expand, different infrastructures become important within the staging of urban rhythms (green and blue routes), cities are explored and experienced anew, and routes are taken with an eye to pleasure as well as utility. Run-commuting reorients people and place, and offers an openness to cities that is attuned to its rhythms, changing nature and hospitality (on a range of registers) that affect the feasibility of the practice and how run-commuting fits within the city. This latter point highlights the publicness of urban mobility, even of individual modes. Encounters and co-existing with others - in public spaces, transport spaces, and work spaces - are central to the production of run-commuting. How the unexpected run-commuting body is responded to in these various city time-spaces are key elements of its enablement and constraints.

Such ideas have become more prominent in response to Covid-19 and the impact this has had on the possibilities, experiences and safety of mass public transit. As usual patterns of mobility have been disrupted, active travel (for both utility and recreation) is being pushed and provisioned with a greater urgency in the UK (De Vos, 2020), with more space being given over active travel and greater thought being paid to how active bodies fit into cities (Cook and Hayes, 2020). The prospects for run-commuting within this context are being discussed more widely in public forums in response (Alger, 2020), and the opportunities, difficulties and

challenges it poses to contemporary city living being deliberated. These discussions highlight that run-commuting offers ways for reconsidering the potential and possibilities of cities, in how we move through them, with them and experience its spaces and publics.

Finally, this research also offers some ways to progress geography's thinking more broadly. While this includes the ethical and methodological considerations for research into unknown and emerging phenomena – arguing for greater holistic research with a keen sensitivity to its impacts on the phenomena of study – the most notable implication is the interdisciplinary positioning of this project and the value that can be gleaned from extending the fields with which geography engages. As well as the transport-mobility collaborations this thesis has already discussed, the influence of sport and exercise studies on this project poses a seemingly fertile avenue for collaboration that is not ventured too regularly. I have drawn extensively on work from sport sociology, physical cultural studies and qualitative research in sport, exercise and health to help make sense of and contextualise run-commuting. Doing so has revealed the great synergies between these fields and geography, the geographical sensibilities of these fields, and the contribution geography could make to them in return. This project firmly contributes to the revitalisation of sport geography within the discipline (Andrews, 2017; Koch, 2018; Coen et al, 2020; Latham and Layton, 2020) and pushes the remit, interests and significance of this revitalisation further. Building on this, I contend geography could certainly gain much from engaging more thoroughly with allied disciplines and furthering its interests and contributions to sport and exercise research.

Limitations

Despites the successes of this project, there are some limitations of the research that warrant emphasising. Firstly, this thesis has predominantly presented a practitioner's perspective on run-commuting at the expense of a wider range viewpoints that could be valuable in understanding it. While organisations related to run-commuting were interviewed for this project, there was not space to include their perspectives here. Secondly, the thesis also focussed on current run-commuters at the expense of former run-commuters or potential run-commuters who have not been able to establish or maintain a run-commuting practice. These

are vital perspectives in understanding the limitations and constraints of the practice, and as such, this thesis is perhaps biased towards what does work in run-commuting rather than more fully grasping barriers to the practice. Hence, the major limitations to the study regard who is missing from this account and whose perspectives are not incorporated into my telling of the emergence, production and potential of run-commuting. In many ways, this is a limitation of the scope and aims of the research. Here I prioritised a more comprehensive exploration of practitioners' perspectives over the inclusion of a wider range of perspectives that would also be valuable in understanding run-commuting.

Future research avenues

Within these limitations however, future research ventures are discernible - the limits and limitations of the thesis reveal matters that warrant further investigation. In this regard, various interesting future research avenues could be embarked upon to develop the work undertaken in this thesis.

Firstly, a broader range of perspectives could be brought to bear on run-commuting to develop wider understandings of the practice. Most notably, exploring the lapsed practices of former run-commuters and not-yet-established practices of potential run-commuters would be highly insightful. Former run-commuters' perspectives would enable an apprehension of why run-commuting practices stop and the barriers to their endurance, while potential run-commuters would better highlight the constraints to starting and establishing a run-commuting practice. Future research could also extend perspectives beyond run-commuters. Engaging with the viewpoints of sport, health and transport organisations as well as those of employers could prove informative for understanding wider perspectives on run-commuting and the potential it offers for individuals and society.

However, even sticking with practitioner perspectives, there is a range of other fascinating aspects to the practice this thesis did not attend to, which would be insightful in more greatly understanding run-commuting. This research did not adequately attend to how practitioners are recruited to run-commuting. It was noted that most run-commuters declared an innate obviousness to run-commuting but this somewhat belies the increasing popularity of it and is deserving of further investigation. The importance of waypoints in producing run-commuting practices

was only dealt with briefly and would benefit from being researched more thoroughly, as indeed would multi-modality in mobility studies. Likewise, the spaces of run-commuting researched could also be widened to grasp how run-commuting is produced in other spaces of enactment. Most pressing here is to understand the role of media spaces in producing run-commuting and the discursive constitution of the practice. Equally, the impact of self-tracking technologies and immobilities on run-commuting experiences were regularly discussed by run-commuters but did not feature in much depth here. These merit wider exploration in future research.

Finally, the emerging nature of run-commuting explored in this project invites a revisiting of the practice in future research to understand how it has changed and any transformations to its emergence, production or potential. These have been my abiding interests in conducting the first study into run-commuting. This thesis has revealed a practice caught between running and transport, and firmly entangled with the practices of everyday life. Run-commuting may appear to primarily be about running, but this thesis has shown it is actually related much more widely to the management of everyday lives in contemporary society, and is performed to make lives more liveable. Run-commuting is a curious practice that's speaks to how we live our lives and their spatio-temporal structuring. As such, it has a significance that belies its prominence and results in a practice fascinating to explore.

Appendix 1

Other methods used in the wider project

This appendix briefly outlines some of the other methods employed as part of this research into run-commuting but which do not feature substantively within the thesis.

Mobile Video Ethnography

Mobile video ethnography involves video-recording the happenings, encounters, interactions, and places of the mobile practice being investigated while on the move (Simpson, 2014). In this project, it involved me wearing a Go-Pro Hero Session camera (a lightweight sports action camera) on my head while undertaking the run-commuting go-alongs. Analysing material collected using mobile video ethnography benefits hugely from the retention of context. This is how it has been used in the presentation of this thesis. It allowed the wider visual context of run-commuters' responses to be captured, aiding understanding and proving useful in illustrating ideas. Beyond context setting and illustration however, the use of mobile video ethnography is able to open up practices more clearly for researcher analysis by recording the vast range of happenings and experiences under investigation. It is claimed that this can enrich our apprehension of practices by focussing attention upon previously hazy elements of mobilities (Brown et al, 2008). These nuanced understandings are facilitated by 'seeing the doing': enabling the capture, replaying and slowing down of practices (Brown and Dilley, 2012). The ability to use technology in such ways grants access to a level of detail which participants would struggle to discuss or even have an awareness of due to their scale or fleeting nature. This analysis is greatly aided by the ability to technologically manipulate the video file. The use of video software to freeze, zoom in, slow down, rewind, and repeat enables a scrutiny of practices simply not possible in real-life, in-the-moment ethnography (Pink, 2014). Greater analytical detail is possible through 'stretching out' movements in this way (Spinney, 2011), helping to make visible often

overlooked competencies, movements and interactions of being on the move, and in doing so, enabling practices to be understood more deeply.

Bio-tracking

The second additional simultaneous method conducted while joining run-commuters on their journeys was bio-tracking. Another mobile method, this is a recent development in geographic methods, facilitated by the increasing availability and decreasing costs of wearable technologies capable of tracking mobile bodies in various ways. Also called, or related to, bio-sensing, bio-mapping, and emotion-mapping (Merchant, 2017), this method concerns the use of somatic and bio-tracking measures (such as GPS, heart rate, cadence) to understand corporeal movements and responses (Osborne and Jones, 2017). Such wearable technology and forms of self-quantification/tracking are also becoming more commonplace in running practices more widely (Lupton, 2016; Osmonde, 2019) and thus seemed suitable to experiment with.

Much of the data measured through bio-tracking is inherently geographical (bodily and spatially) and Spinney (2015) and Merchant (2017) argue that the use of wearable bio-tracking technologies can augment our apprehensions of embodied mobile practices in multiple ways, setting out some key reasons why. Firstly, there is value in the data in and of itself, that wearable bio-tracking technology provides new ways of scrutinising and anatomising mobile experiences by capturing hitherto inaccessible phenomena associated with mobile bodies. Such technologies seek to represent bodily data in a quantitative form, almost letting bodies speak for themselves, rather than requiring a cognitive representation of mobile sensations. However, as Spinney (2015) argues for all the use this data may have, letting the body speak for itself tends to provides a thin description and remains too abstract. This leads to the second potential value of using such technologies – as a form of elicitation. Other studies, such as those by Nold (2009), have demonstrated the detailed and personal interpretations participants can offer on data collected by such technologies. In this way, combining data from wearable technologies with follow up interviews, goes beyond letting our bodies speak for themselves, instead such data is used to guide and instigate discussions where participants are able to 'flesh out' and give meaning to what might be quite abstract, limited or numerical

data. In doing so, new kinds of research are enabled which combine the objective biometric and geographic data with the subjective story of that experience. Elicitation through interviews is a way to contextualise bodily responses and changes offering chances to look at the why as well as the what (Osborne and Jones, 2017).

I aimed to apply these potential benefits of bio-tracking technologies to my exploration of run-commuting practices. I was intrigued about the ability of such technologies to dissect a moving body and provide data relating to somatic and biological rhythms, which could be particularly useful for examining the embodied experiences and rhythms of run-commuting. Using a Garmin Forerunner 920XT running watch and heart rate monitor chest strap, each participant undertaking a go-along interview wore these devices, capturing their biometric, physiological and geographical data along the run. Specifically, the watch used was capable of recording:

- Geographical location and elevation, which would enable run-commuting routes to be effectively tracked and any location-specific responses to marked.
- Distance, duration, speed and pace, which would provide some of the brute facts of movement regarding run-commuting.
- Heart-rate, measured as beats per minute, which provide an indication of the demands on the cardiovascular system of a runner and the effort involved in run-commuting.
- There are then six metrics termed 'running dynamics' which dissect the movements of the running body in various ways. They are stride length, cadence, vertical oscillation, vertical ratio, ground contact time and ground contact time balance.

The claims made for measuring these phenomena by the watch manufacturer is they provide an insight into the running form and how it can be made more effective in order to improve running performance. However, I also wondered whether by dissecting the running motion in such a way, they could provide insights into rhythm, flow and effort in the embodiment of run-commuting and whether they would enable participants to discuss these ideas if used as a form of elicitation. Using such technologies as part of the research may also have provided useful avenues into discussing the wider practices, cultures and affectivity of these self-tracking technologies in running. As such, four of the participants (those London-based) who

undertook go-along interviews then had a third follow-up interview (totalling 5 hours 44 minutes). In this, we reviewed the bio-tracking data from their run, and examined their use of this data, their practices of self-tracking and ruminated on the relationship between this abstracted data and the actual experience of the run. Due to time limitations, this was not possible for those go-along interviewees based outside of London. In these cases, the data from the go-along interview and mobile video ethnography was used to contextualised the bio-tracking, which was also done with those who had a follow-up interview.

Autoethnography / Autobiography

Autoethnography is a form of research where the researcher explicitly situates and writes themselves into the research account by drawing on their own personal lived experience of the cultures or practices being explored (Allen-Collinson, 2012). Autoethnography is becoming an increasingly used method in social sciences and humanities (Butz and Besio, 2009), and has been used effectively in both in mobilities and sport research (see Larsen, 2014; Allen-Collinson and Hockey, 2008 respectively). Autoethnography has generated enthusiasm from those interested in ways of researching, portraying and evoking lived corporeal experiences. It is something I sought to harness in this project and so I kept an authoethnographic run-commuting diary for three months, from July – September 2017, as I took up and began to establish my own run-commuting practice. The diaries were not systematically analysed however, and as such, this method may better be presented as an autoethnographically-inform autobiography. Autobiography, as a first person account of life experiences, has been used effectively in mobilities research, generating useful data capable of enhancing understandings of the research subject, recognising the relationship between the researcher and the research, and in using the researcher as a key informant (Letherby, 2010). Although occupying a lesser role in the methodological bricolage than originally planned, autobiography has been used where relevant in the thesis, drawing on my own experiences of run-commuting to contextualise, help make sense of, and contribute to the findings discussed in the thesis.

Virtual ethnography

A form of ethnography occurring in online spaces rather than offline, recognising the role these places have in the taking place of social life (Hine, 2000), the virtual ethnography of this project involved a form of archiving – collecting and scrapbooking online materials came across, found and sought related to run-commuting. These included blog posts, media articles and social media posts, predominantly from Twitter. While some of these digital artefacts were stumbled upon, I was aided in making this archive by the use of Google news alerts for anything related to run-commuting and automatic Twitter archiving using IFTTT, which stored tweets related to key run-commuting hashtags in a Google Sheet. These materials and artefacts speak to the discursive production of run-commuting and the role representations of the practice may have in the emergence of it. This is an important aspect of run-commuting but unfortunately not explored in this thesis. As such, the content and discourse analysis planned for these materials has not yet been conducted. Due to familiarity with this dataset some artefacts will be drawn on at relevant points in the thesis however, to help exemplify or clarify any ideas emerging from other methods used in this bricolage.

Appendix 2

Issues with Strava as a data source

The data offered by Strava is extremely valuable to understanding run-commuting practices and was drawn on at several points on this thesis. However, caution certainly needs to be heeded with this dataset, for a few key reasons. Firstly, data from Strava is only representative of Strava users rather than the wider population of run-commuters. Although drawing on a large population, certain kinds of runners/run-commuters are more likely to use Strava than others. It was initially associated with more experienced and serious runners (based on Stebbin's conceptualisation discussed in Chapter 2) who desire the self-tracking analytics the platform offers (similar to those discussed in Appendix 1) to understand and improve their performances, as also reported by Littlejohns et al (2019). However, this population continues to diversify as the popularity of Strava grows and the platform changes (Goode, 2017). There is also a geography of Strava users, with the platform being more popular in some countries than others, with GPS and mobile data infrastructure being important here. Therefore, Strava data may represent certain kinds of runners rather than others. Secondly, how Strava is actually used by its users needs to be questioned. This is a really interest aspect of running practices, worthy of wider consideration than I can give it here. Important for now, however, is questioning the presumption that users track and record all activities they do on the platform. This may not be the case, as some participants in this study explained:

> **Sienna:** [I do not use self-tracking] so much. I think that was mainly just for marathon [training], just because I had to know how far I was running, but now, because it's not really about that, then I'm not tracking it … I think I might have a couple of times [for the run-commute]. Maybe near the start to see how far it was and how quick it was. But then once I knew, then I stopped doing it.

Others explained to me that often they do not record their run-commutes, as they use run-commuting simply as extra running (rather than any particular form of training) or as a recovery (purposefully slower) run, as explored further in Chapter 9. Because of this, some choose not to record run-commutes as they do not need

the analytics offered or, given the social comparison aspects of Strava, fear looking bad, as also shown by Littlejohns et al (2019). Therefore, it may ensue that only certain kinds of run-commutes are recorded on the platform and are not indicative of all run-commutes. Thirdly, wariness is needed in accepting any year-on-year changes reported by Strava. As their user numbers continue to grow, these changes are likely to represent changes in their population as well as changes in the practices, which may be difficult to unpick. Lastly, caution is needed in regards to what Strava classifies as a run-commute. As a user, it is possible to mark any activity as a commute, however Strava does not only include these in their reporting of run-commuting. An algorithm is also used to identify run-commutes. The logics of the algorithm are not publicly available nor were disclosed to me when I enquired. While this limits my ability to meticulously evaluate the usefulness of this precise data, any algorithm will rely on assumptions about what makes a run-commute identifiable, leading to missing those which stray from this and incorporating other types of running that match these assumptions. For these four reasons, despite offering a potentially invaluable source of information about run-commuting, the data from Strava needs to be accepted cautiously and its accuracy questioned. Due to the limitations highlighted, the insights presented from Strava data should be considered suggestive rather than exact.

Appendix 3
Run-commuting population calculations

Number of run-commuters on Strava

In 2018, Strava reported a total of 4,597,743 run-commutes were logged in the UK and Ireland. With an average of 1.55 run-commutes per week per run-commuter, this indicates that there are around 57,000 run-commuters in the UK and Ireland who log their activities on Strava.

Number of run-commuters in the UK

This estimation is based upon a couple of assumptions. Firstly, that only those who are already runners would be run-commuters and secondly, that Strava users are broadly representative of the wider running population in the UK and Ireland. The latter is unlikely to be true, with Strava users generally being more experienced and serious runners than the wider running population (Littlejohns et al, 2019) and therefore possibly more likely to run-commute. These assumptions mean that the following estimation would act as an upper-estimate of the numbers of run-commuters in the UK.

As shown, it has been approximated that there are 57,000 UK and Ireland run-commuters on Strava. An approximation of the total number of runners from UK and Ireland on Strava is also possible. In 2018, Strava reported that 42.1 million runs were logged in the UK and Ireland with an average of 32 activities being uploaded per athlete (as they call them). This suggests that there are 1,315,625 runners on Strava from the UK and Ireland. In turn, it can be approximated that 4.33% of the running population are run-commuters in the UK and Ireland. This can be extrapolated to the whole of the UK population rather than just the Strava population. Sport England's 2018 Active Lives Survey shows that 15% of the population in England runs at least twice per month. For England this equals 6,831,000 runners and would imply that with a population of 66 million, there are 9.9 million runners in the UK. At 4.33% of this, an upper estimation of the run-commuting population in the UK would stand at 428,670. This is almost certainly an over-estimation, but taken together it is possible to provide upper and lower approximations of the UK run-commuting population from the Strava and Sport

England's Active Lives Survey data sources. The absolute lower estimation is 57,000 and the absolute upper estimation is around 425,000. The midway estimation from these then, would be around a quarter of a million, standing at 241,000.

Run-commuting estimations from the Census 2011

Run-commuting or any variant of its name, has never appeared in any nationwide survey about travel, transport or commuting in the UK. However, some do record those who travel to work 'on foot', such as the UK census. While it would be impossible to unravel run-commuting from any other kinds of foot mobilities, a presumption could be made that commutes on foot above a particular distance are more likely to be made by running than walking, for example, due to its higher speed and therefore shorter durations. A 10km (6.2miles) commute on foot would take around 2 hours to walk, well above the average commuting duration (Department for Transport, 2017c), whereas it would take between a quarter and half that time to complete by running, depending on the speed a person was travelling at. This distance is also the roughl average ran by run-commuters on a single commute journey. While using this proxy will inevitably miss many run-commutes (those below 10km), and include those which are not, it may allow a nationwide estimate to be made about the number of run-commuters in the UK. In the 2011 census (Office for National Statistics, 2019a), 9.78% of the commuting population travelled to work on foot, equalling around 2.61 million foot commuters. Of these, 7.74% had a commuting distance of 10km or above. If accepting the assumptions outlined above, this suggests that in 2011, there could have been a potential run-commuting population of 201,966. This falls towards the middle of the estimations made from Strava's data. As mentioned, there is obviously no way of knowing if these foot commuters were running or not but there are two further key points should be noted about this. Firstly, 2011 is just before the rapid rising popularity of run-commuting witnessed over the last few years and therefore may not be an accurate proxy. Secondly, the census asks for the most common way of travelling to work. As show in the thesis, for many practitioners, run-commuting would not class as this and therefore may be under-represented in this data set.

Appendix 4

Calculations of average commuting distance

In comparing the average commuting distance of run-commuters and with the national average, the average commuting distances of run-commuting I showed may imply that they generally have shorter commutes than the average commuter. However there may be differences in how the average is calculated. Given the skewing effects of longer commutes, I presented the mode and median commuting distance as a more accurate average. While it is not explicitly stated what is meant by average in the Department for Transport (2017c) report the UK average commuting distance came from, this may most commonly refer to the mean. In which case, run-commuters actually have slightly longer total commutes, with a mean of 10.32 miles. However, this comparison gets complicated further by differences in what classes as the commuting distance (as the crow flies or route taken) as discussed by the Department for Transport (2017c). Such a distinction was not made to respondents of my survey so it is not known what they classified as their commute distance.

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